



HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

MINICOMIC
COLLECTION
VOLUME 1





Bruce W. Timm
'85



MINICOMIC COLLECTION

VOLUME 1

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HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE MINICOMIC COLLECTION VOLUME 1®

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FOREWORD



I wasn't there at the beginning. Let me be clear about that upfront.

Success, as they say, has many fathers, and the parentage of He-Man and the Masters of the Universe has been often debated, if not disputed. Alas, I can shed no light on its birth.

But I was happily involved in this wonderful world's expansion, its broadening horizons, its deepening legacy. As a fan (and if you are reading this, you certainly are one), you may be tempted to believe that MOTU's origins and development were the stuff of deep philosophic and fantastical debate, its creators toiling by candlelight, ruminating on the vast mysteries of its legends and the wondrous powers of its mighty characters.

Allow me to burst your bubble.

We were toy makers. With the proverbial Battle Cat by the tail. However it may have started, MOTU took on a life all its own. And as its guardians, we were charged with creating not only the products that captured its essence in three dimensions, but the stories that would guide children's exploration of its universe. It was our job to make it make sense. But more important, it had to be fun.

That doesn't mean we didn't take it seriously. We argued over the finer details—the logic of why Thunder Punch He-Man could reasonably expect to defeat Dragon Blaster Skeletor, for example—all while we struggled to manage the mix of the basic figures. It was all part of the job. And it was a gas.

I joined Mattel in 1984 and immediately began working in the Packaging department. My role? Write the package copy and name the characters. How cool was that? A few months in, I took on the additional

responsibility of overseeing the development of the minicomics that were packed with the toys. Apart from an abiding love for Batman in general and a recent spin as an editor for TSR Hobbies, I came to this role with no prior comics pedigree. But I understood this much: I needed to help readers make sense of who these characters were and why they mattered in the MOTU world.

With the help of talented artists like Bruce Timm and under the patient guidance of editor Lee Nordling, the true “art” of comic storytelling in the MOTU world came into sharper focus. When it was time to introduce the Snake Men, we worked diligently to figure out the origins and the characters. And when we were asked to make sense of the legends of Grayskull, we treated it like we were charged with mapping previously unexplored territory on the moon. This was serious stuff.

In the end, my greatest hope was that the children who tore into those packages, played with the toys, and read the minicomics would fall in love with these masters . . . and their amazing universe . . . and would return to their stories for enjoyment for days on end.

The fact that this book exists suggests that we succeeded.

I couldn't be more proud. ✘

Tim Kilpin
February 2015
Mattel President,
Chief Commercial Officer



In addition to being an action figure powerhouse, the 1982 Masters of the Universe line was also beloved for its inclusion of minicomics. No other toy line in history has included a pack-in-comic run of that magnitude. The vintage Masters of the Universe toy line would include a whopping forty-nine minicomics, measuring approximately four inches wide by five inches tall. Many of them told stories that were centered around the toy with which they

were packaged. Mattel also created two slightly larger illustrated pack-ins: one came with the Point Dread and Talon Fighter vehicle playset, and one came with an Evil Horde two-pack. The latter is one of the most highly sought-after comics due to its rarity and because it is illustrated and colored entirely by the legendary Bruce Timm. All fifty-one of these action-packed comics are included here for your enjoyment. Relive the adventure! ☒

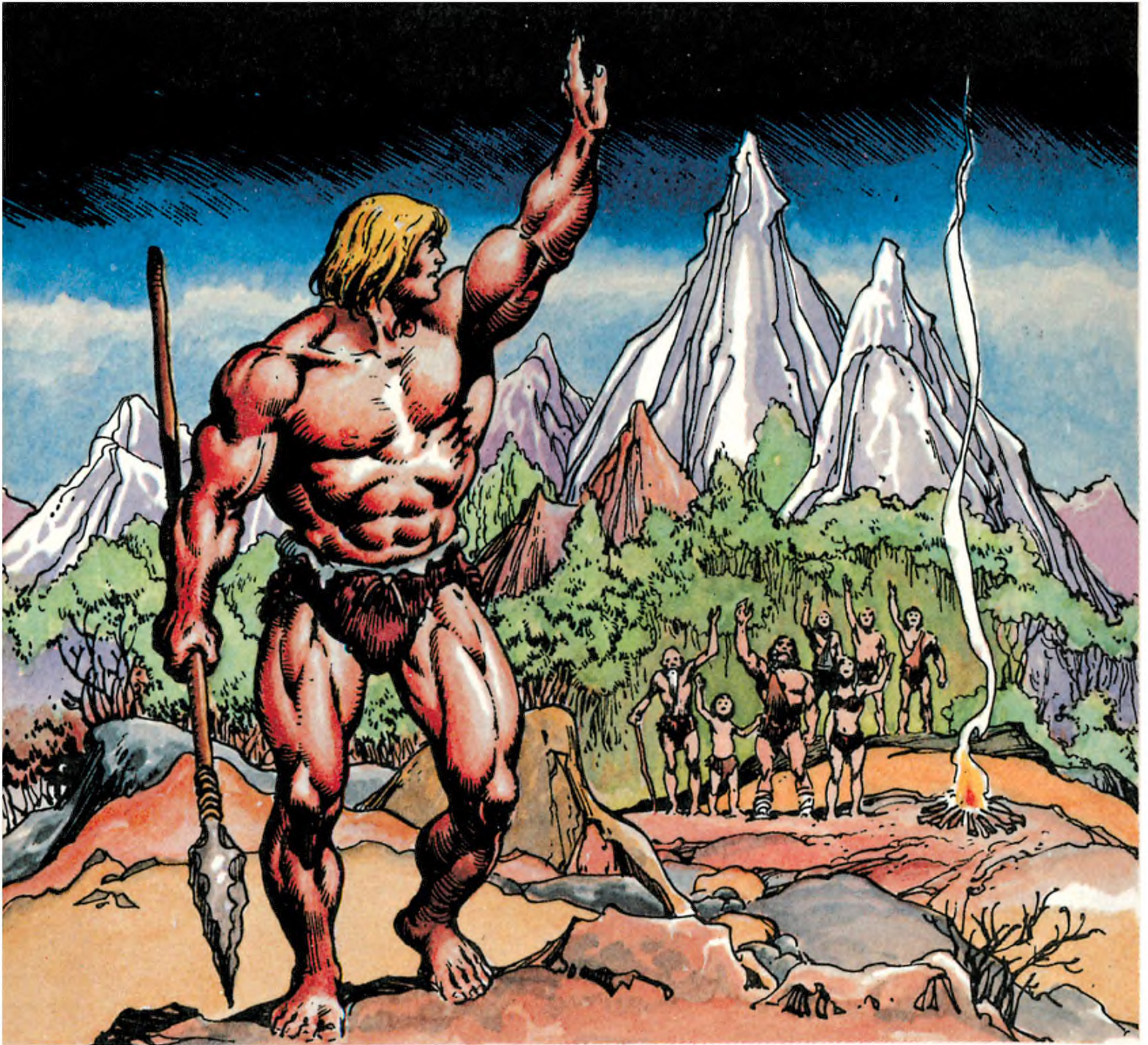
HE-MAN™ AND THE POWER SWORD

MASTERS

OF THE UNIVERSE™



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A mighty figure stood at the edge of the jungle that had, until this day, always been his home. *He-Man*, the tribe's greatest warrior, waved his farewell. He might have preferred to stay, but he had a noble mission to accomplish.

"Evil forces exist on our planet Eternia," *He-Man* told his people. "They seek to control the legendary *Castle Grayskull*, a place of wonders. If we are to know a lasting peace, I must go out and battle those forces. Farewell!"



The outside world had long been a mystery to *He-Man's* tribe, although they had heard the fantastic tales about the mysterious *Castle Grayskull*. *He-Man* was the first of his people to trudge these craggy cliffs and quake-torn valleys. His homeland was already in the distant mists when he heard the cry for help.

Gazing into the valley, *He-Man* saw that his courage and jungle-bred strength were already needed!



In a blur of bronze movement, *He-Man* leaped from the cliffside and onto his shaggy foe. His powerful fingers dug deeply into the monster's hide. But *He-Man* was not fighting this creature alone.

He-Man glimpsed the woman as she gestured magically and attacked the creature with mystical bolts of force. "She is a sorceress!" he thought. But her magic hardly fazed the animal. The same could not be said of *He-Man's* might.



Defeated, the animal fled, while the Sorceress regained her breath. "Your strength . . . your courage," she said, "mark you as the legendary hero who is to inherit the treasures I have guarded all these years. They were made centuries before the Great Wars by Eternia's scientists."

Inside the ancient ruins, the Sorceress gave *He-Man* the guarded costumes and weapons. "They will add to your strength. Use them wisely — especially in defense of *Castle Grayskull*."

- While many fans attribute the name "Coddled" to the great character with red hair, it is actually the Sorceress of the Eternia universe. Later, the Sorceress's story and design were changed completely.
- In the original 1987 *He-Man* comic book by Mark Troyer, the Sorceress was wearing a green corset and she did not have green skin.



Riding in the strange vehicle, which was a combination battering ram, catapult, and space-warp device — *He-Man* set off again on his mission. A particular valley, still miles away from the castle, struck his fancy. This valley would serve as his new home and headquarters.

Wearing the costume that gave him superhuman strength, *He-Man* went to work carving out his new home — using no tools other than the power in his fists.



But even as *He-Man* constructed his dwelling, evil eyes were gazing upon *Teela*, the warrior-goddess, as she watered her unicorn charger.

"There is none in all of Eternia as beautiful as she," grunted the ape-like *Beast Man*. "I'm really starting to believe that she is a goddess!"

"Soon she will be more than that," whispered his master, *Skeletor*. "Soon she will be my bride!"



But it was no simple matter to capture the warrior-goddess. She fought like a demon, her body possessing the spirits of many ancestral champions. Only Skeletor's energy-blade, after freezing her courageous steed, at long last shocked her unconscious.

"Carry her to Castle Grayskull," Skeletor commanded his underling, *Beast Man*. "But be careful! I do not like having my bride-to-be damaged!"



By nightfall, *Skeletor* and *Beast Man* had brought their sleeping captive to *Castle Grayskull*, a fortress so ancient that no one knew its origin. An eerie voice — that of the castle's all-present Spirit — warned them: "Go back! The secrets and treasures of *Grayskull* are for no one to possess! Go away..."

Another warrior secretly watched, as *Skeletor* defied the warning...and forced open the castle's *Jaw-Bridge*.

- The artist, *Alfredo Alcala*, used early toy prototype figures and concepts as when working on the miniseries, which is why *Castle Grayskull* has a more primitive look than all the other *He-Man* appearances (though different from the look that some released).
- *Beast Man* is only working with *Madame's* evil warriors. This has been seen in the *He-Man* *He-Man* guide, where *Beast Man* is described as "a yeller working on things of *He-Man*."



Entering the grim castle, Skeletor and his accomplice failed to notice the other warrior departing through the shadows in his heavily armed chariot.

"I defy you, Spirit of the Castle!" shouted Skeletor. "Your many secrets shall be mine! I hold half of the mystic *Power Sword*! I shall soon possess the other half which is hidden within your walls. Then I will have full power! And none of your deadly traps will stop me!"



"When I join *both* halves of the Power Sword together," exclaimed Skeletor, "the magic fires, created by ancient scientists and sorcerers, will blaze again!" And he thought back...

"Once I lived in another dimension, populated with others of my kind. But when the Great Wars opened a 'hole' in the dimensional wall, I was thrown into *this* world. With the complete Power Sword, I shall reopen that hole and bring my people here to conquer this dimensional world!"



After strapping the unconscious warrior-goddess to a stone slab, *Beast Man* searched, with animal-like cunning, through the castle. At last, he found an ancient scroll upon which had been drawn a map. The map, which seemed to have been drawn in blood, had many strange symbols which only *Skeletor* could understand.

"They show the way to a fiery sword!" he shouted. Following the map, *Skeletor* led the way to a secret passage.



He-Man was finishing his dwelling when he saw the approaching chariot. "And what brings the famous Man-At-Arms to my humble house?" he asked sarcastically.

Man-At-Arms, whose people were masters of all weapons, described what he had seen. "If Skeletor controls the castle, he might use its secrets to conquer Eternia," he said coldly. "And I shudder to think what fate he has planned for the warrior-goddess."



"If we fight side-by-side," offered *Man-At-Arms*, "we can more easily defeat *Skeletor* and his henchman."

"You would be a worthy partner," said *He-Man*. "But if the threat is as great as you say, I have no time to waste getting to *Castle Grayskull* by wheels."

And, before *Man-At-Arms* could say another word, *He-Man* activated the *Battle Ram's* space-warp device. Moments later, *He-Man* was vanishing... to reappear somewhere else.



At the castle, meanwhile, *Skeletor* and *Beast Man* had reached the end of the secret passageway and had found a rusty metal door. But as they touched the door, the Spirit of the Castle cursed them and unleashed its ghostly demons.

Beast Man's claws and fangs only went through the spectres, but *Skeletor*'s lightning-blade quickly blasted them to nothingness. "Again I defeat you, Spirit of the Castle!" rasped *Skeletor*. "Now, to seize your greatest treasure!"



Yet, not even the brute strength of *Beast Man* could break open the door.

"Stand back, you ape!" ordered *Skeletor*, as he proceeded to cut through the ancient door with his lightning-blade as if it were melting butter. And even as the door gave way, a commotion could be heard from outside. "See what it is," commanded *Skeletor*.

And *Beast Man* loped obediently down the dark corridor.



Outside the castle, *He-Man* was using his vehicle like a battering-ram to try to gain entry.

"*He-Man!*" snarled *Beast Man*, as he reached the castle's laser-cannon and fired a deadly bolt toward his foe. But *He-Man*'s forcefield garment easily repelled the blast.

"Is that the *best* you can do, you brainless gorilla?" *He-Man* taunted. "If so, I have nothing to worry about!"



Perhaps *He-Man* did not have to worry about the laser-cannon penetrating his forcefield. But he did not figure on *Beast Man* choosing a new target...the vehicle which was not protected by that barrier of force!

As *He-Man* rolled out of the overturning vehicle, his costume's forcefield was accidentally switched off.

"Now to finish you off!" growled *Beast Man*, aiming the laser-cannon at his seemingly helpless victim.



Inside the tunnel, Skeletor saw the shiny object. Its broken blade seemed to beckon to him. He grasped it in his scaly hands, then eagerly placed the two halves of the ancient object together. He could feel the unbelievable energies of the sword as the blade burst into green fire!

"The restored Power Sword!" he exclaimed. "With this, I am invincible! There is nothing I cannot do! Nothing!"

Weapon in hand, he turned thirstily for battle.



Before *Beast Man* could make good his threat, his attack was interrupted by the timely appearance of *Man-At-Arms*. Firing his flame-throwing weapon, *Man-At-Arms* said, "I'll keep him occupied, *He-Man*!"

Turning to the castle, *He-Man* pulled with all his mighty strength, taxing his natural power to the limit. Finally, he pulled down the creaking Jaw-Bridge. Flexing his muscles, he said, "Now to help *Teela* and stop the evil *Skeletor*!"



Throwing off his damaged forcefield costume, *He-Man* hurried down the castle elevator, finding *Skeletor* waiting for him. With a simple wave of the Power Sword, *Skeletor* brought to life many objects inside the castle and commanded them to attack his foe. Without his forcefield to protect him, *He-Man* fought off the barrage of objects as best he could. But the objects, energized by the Power Sword, continued coming.

"This is only the beginning," boasted *Skeletor*.



But Skeletor's moment of triumph was abruptly ended as a beautiful figure appeared before him, glowing green like the energies of the Power Sword.

"You have abused the Power Sword," the Sorceress said. And with magical gestures, she removed the Power Sword from Skeletor's hand, splitting it again into halves.

Immediately the objects attacking *He-Man* dropped lifelessly to the floor. A moment later, the Sorceress vanished.



Having lost his most powerful weapon, Skeletor fled to the roof of the castle, where *Beastman* and *Man At Arms* were already engaged in mortal combat.

He-Man saw an awakened *Tee-La* tear herself free of her bonds. Then both warriors rushed up the castle's elevator. Soon they were hotly engaged in the rooftop battle.

Hopelessly outnumbered, Skeletor and *Beastman* both pleaded. "Mercy!" With that plea, the battle ended.



Together, *He-Man*, *Man-At-Arms* and *Teela* watched their defeated foes flee toward the horizon. Then, seeing an apparition below, they climbed down from the roof of the castle.

"From now on," said the Sorceress, "only the halves of the Power Sword, inserted into this enchanted lock, will open the castle's Jaw-Bridge. And, to keep this castle from again falling into evil hands, I shall hide both halves in secret places."

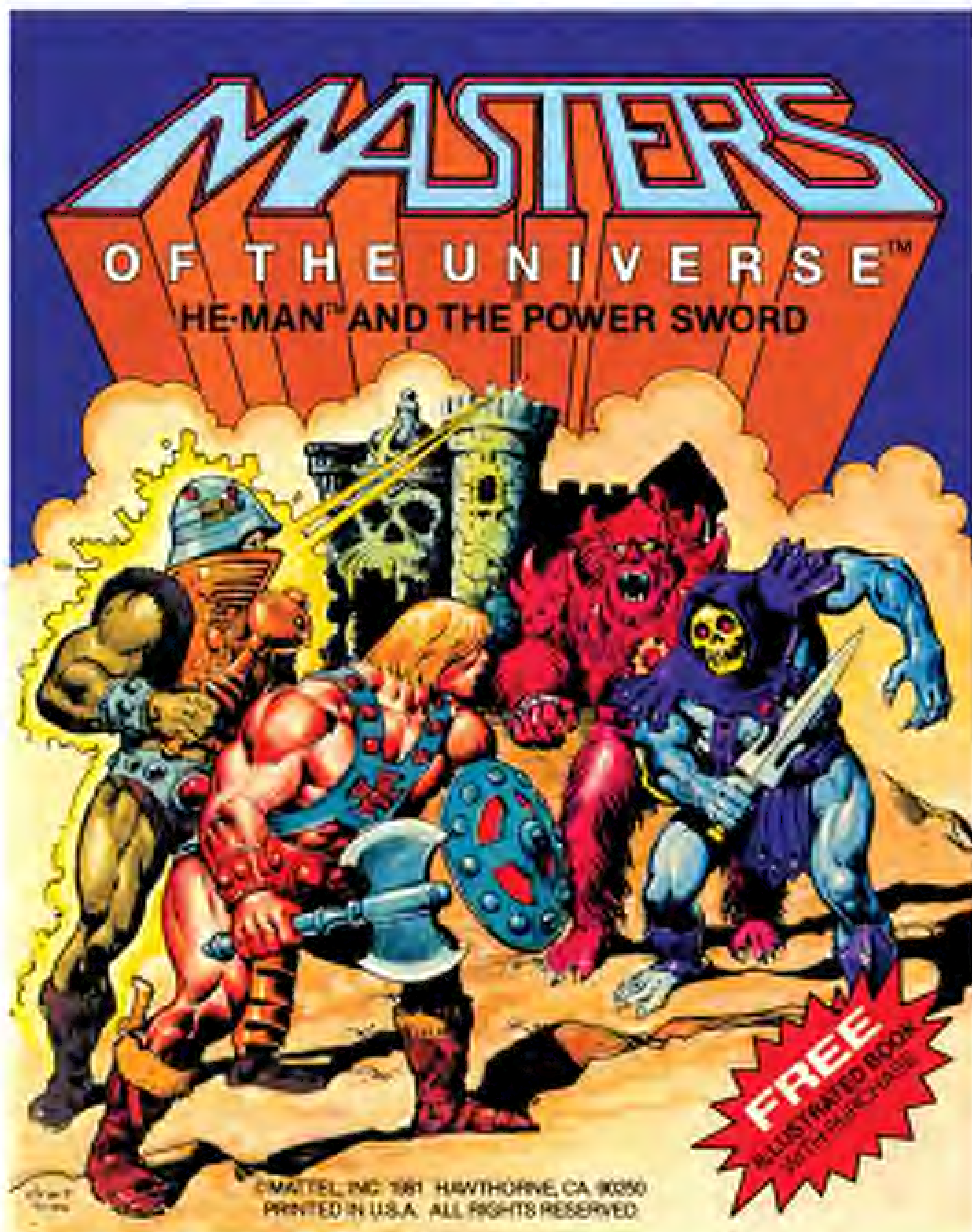
Saying that, she vanished again in a green cloud.



"You truly are the '*Masters of the Universe*' who are destined to protect my secrets from evil forces," said the Spirit of the Castle. "You should have at least some small reward." That reward came in the form of a snow-white unicorn that galloped over the hill, returning to his mistress.

"Do you think that is the last of those two or the Power Sword?" asked *Man-At-Arms*.

"I doubt it," answered *He-Man*. But as he looked toward the rising sun, it seemed to be a good omen for Eternia and the '*Masters of the Universe*.'



Marvel made millions of Masters of the Universe toys in the 1980s. In just the first two years of production, approximately seventy million toys were sold worldwide. This means that the Masters of the Universe minicomics have some of the largest print runs in the history of comics. As a result, numerous variations exist.

But before these comics were ever packaged with the toys, they got their start with a promotional edition of the very first minicomic: He-Man and the Power Sword. Not much is currently known about the exact nature of the original promotional edition. It seems likely it was given to the press and to potential retail accounts to help promote the 1982 release of the Masters of the Universe toy line.

It is unique in that it possesses a developmental or temporary logo that is less refined in appearance. The story and cross-sell ad on the back also feature the working names of the characters before they were trademarked: He-Man is "Fee-La," Man-At-Arms is "Man At Arms," and Beast Man is "Beastman." What's even more interesting is that the story contains the working title for the brand, *Lords of Power*.

Since this edition was not released with the toys, it is extremely rare and considered one of the crowning jewels of any Masters of the Universe minicomic collection. But the variants did not stop there.



The original four minicomics that came with the initial characters contained many variations. Depending on where and when they were printed, *He-Man and the Power Sword*, *King of Castle Gray-Skull*, *Battle in the Clouds*, and *The Vengeance of Skeletor* might feature a band that says, "Free illustrated book with purchase," the same band without the word *free*, or no band at all. Different editions also came with different interior ads. And there was even a later release of *He-Man and the Power Sword* where they truncated the page count and revised the story to fit the reduced number of interior pages.





One of the most common variations on almost all of the English *Masters of the Universe*, *Princess of Power*, and *New Adventures-era He-Man* minicomics was the copyright line, which was often featured on the cover. The toys were produced in a handful of factories across the globe. To coincide, batches of comics were also printed in different countries. Many of the English minicomics stated they were printed in countries like the USA, Hong Kong, Malaysia, or Taiwan.

Foreign variants usually used the same artwork with a translated story. At times, they also had the logo translated into the native language. But some of the most unique foreign *Masters of the Universe* minicomic variants were produced by Estrela in Brazil. Nineteen of these minicomics are known to exist, all translated into Brazilian Portuguese.

Two major factors make these stand out. First is the creation of new minicomics for characters such as Evil-Lyn, Zolac, and Targ Lashor. These stories only exist in the Estrela line of minicomics. And second is that the Estrela versions of existing minicomics contain artwork that was completely redrawn. This artwork is typically simpler in nature, with flat colors and bolder line work. The most fascinating aspect is how some characters were redrawn to match more closely with

the Filmation cartoon designs. And in some cases, characters were completely replaced. One cover features Teela in place of He-Man. And in many stories, He-Man is replaced with Prince Adam.

Despite the large production runs of all the minicomics, many did not survive. A lot of them were lost, thrown away, or heavily damaged through years of repeat readings by eager children across the globe. This has resulted in a number of minicomics being hard to find, especially in near-mint condition, and some of these variants are now extremely hard to locate. For fans everywhere, tracking down these minicomics and their variants is its own adventure. So while this book may feature all of the English stories, it is still only a taste of a complete He-Man and She-Ra minicomic collection! 🌟

KING OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL™

MASTERS

OF THE UNIVERSE™





On his way home from battle, *He-Man*, the greatest of the *Masters of the Universe*, halted *Battle Cat* near the mysterious fortress, *Castle Grayskull*.

"The castle was built by unknown hands before the Great Wars," he said to *Battle Cat*. "It is said that whoever controls the castle controls the universe."

Riding away from the castle, *He-Man* was unaware of a skull-faced figure watching from a parapet.



Skeletor, Lord of Destruction and the most cunning, fiendish villain on the planet Eternia, wielded his energy-blade. Mystical forces, created in another dimension, shot from the blade to form a magic lens.

"Now," said *Skeletor* to himself. "Let us see what wonders are happening within *Castle Grayskull*."

An image of beauty slowly appeared in the lens.

"Ah — it is the warrior-goddess," smiled *Skeletor*.



Teela listened as the *Spirit of the Castle* spoke. "Legend tells of a warrior who will find the split halves of the Power Sword. One half is hidden at Eternia's highest point. The other is beneath its hardest rock. With both halves, he can enter the castle and claim the throne and the secrets of the universe. You are to be the guardian here!"

"Thank you," Teela replied. "This is an honor!"



Skeletor then swore that he would become King of Castle Grayskull by making the legend come true. But first, he needed the halves of the Power Sword.

"Eternia's highest point is the mountain-top realm of my winged-enemy, *Stratos*," he said.

Finding the peak, *Skeletor* saw the sword, half-buried in a rock. Using the hottest blast of his energy-blade, he freed the half-weapon from its bed.



"The second clue can refer only to the hard rock upon which *He-Man* built his home," grinned *Skeletor*.

With obedient *Mer-Man* to aid him, *Skeletor* went to *He-Man*'s home. Before *He-Man* could grab one of his super-power outfits, *Mer-Man* attacked! Not even *Battle Cat* could protect his master.

As *He-Man* fell, *Skeletor*'s energy-blade revealed the other half of the coveted *Power Sword*.



Skeletor left *Mer-Man* to finish off the fallen foe, then he set out on foot for *Castle Grayskull*. He paused only to disguise his skully face with grayish clay. When he reached the castle, he looked up at its gray-skulled facade, and he boldly thrust both halves of the Power Sword into the stone lock.

A grating, creaking sound came from the castle. The Jaw-Bridge opened to swallow its new king.



Teela trustingly waited, and the disguised *Skeletor* walked through the castle and rode to the upper level on the elevator. She saw that his face was much like that of the castle's own facade.

"You *must* be the king!" exclaimed *Teela*. "But I did not expect you to arrive so soon!"

"Don't waste a king's time with chatter, woman," he bellowed. "Just show me to my majestic throne!"



With feelings of triumph and contempt, Skeletor seated himself on the throne. Though it was ancient, the throne moved, and Skeletor recognized its secret devices and controls. What power he would have.

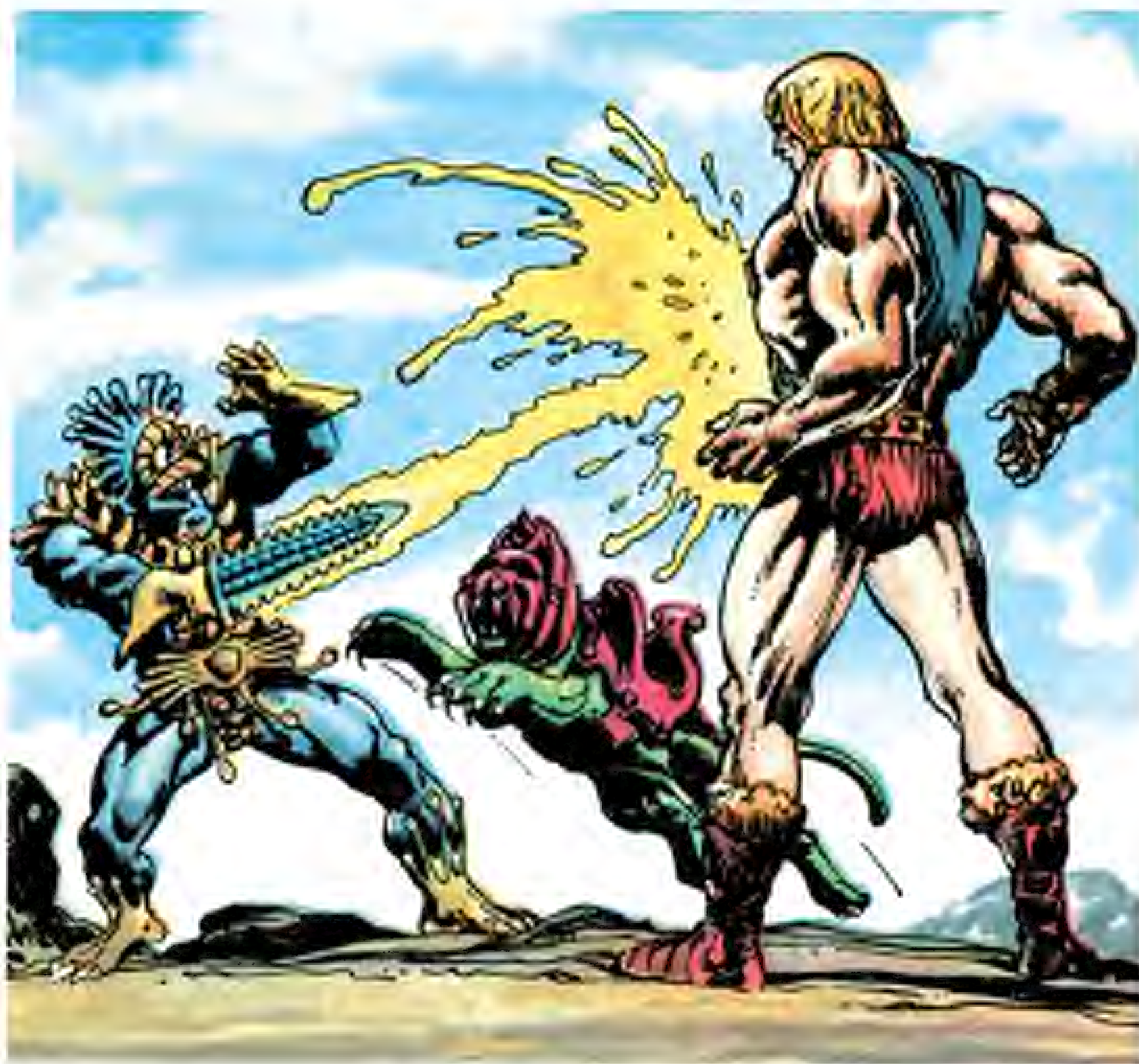
"How may I serve you, Majesty?" asked Teela.

"*This way!*" he laughed, wiping off the disguising clay, as he turned the throne ninety degrees to face a door...a trapdoor that opened beneath Teela.



Alone on the upper level, *Skeletor* gazed at his new domain, marveling at the wonders of the civilization that had built the castle. He saw computers, monitor screens, weapons and many wonderful controls.

"These things are mine!" he shouted to the unseen *Spirit of the Castle*. "The secrets of the universe are now at my command. Soon Eternia and all other worlds will belong to me. I am now *king*!"



As *Skeletor* studied the many marvels of the castle, *Mer-Man* was still engaged in a losing battle.

"You should have hurried back to your sea when you had a chance," yelled *He-Man*, "because I have had time to get into my forcefield garment!"

As *Mer-Man* aimed for a closer blast at *He-Man*, an angry roar filled the air and *Battle Cat* made a successful attack, turning the tide of battle.



Battered and defeated, *Mer-Man* limped away to heal his wounds. *He-Man* put on another outfit that increased his already great strength. Then mounting *Battle Cat's* saddle, he rode toward the distant castle to find *Skeletor* and the Power Sword!

"You survived that dull-witted *Mer-Man*" said *Skeletor*, as, on a monitor, he watched *He-Man* approach the castle. "But you will not survive King *Skeletor*!"



He-Man dismounted from *Battle Cat* and cautiously moved toward the castle. He knew that only the complete *Power Sword* could open the castle's *Jaw-Bridge*. Nevertheless, *He-Man* tugged at the closed *Jaw-Bridge*, with all of his superhuman strength.

"It appears *He-Man* needs aid!" said *Skeletor*, opening the *Jaw-Bridge* by means of a panel control, and thus flipping the surprised hero into the castle.



"Castle Grayskull now has its king," taunted *Skeletor*.
"Are you not going to kneel to the king?"

"You'll not be so glib once I wipe that grin from your skull-face, fiend!" threatened *He-Man*.

"We shall see, oafish one!" laughed *Skeletor*, his fingers moving to one of the throne's hidden controls to release a barrage of jolting energy.

Darkness came swiftly to *He-Man*.



When consciousness returned to *He-Man*, he was in a dank dungeon with another prisoner.

"*Teela!*" he gasped. "*Skeletor* has gone insane!"

"We must escape," she exclaimed. "We must stop him before he masters all of the castle's secrets."

"Be thankful that the fiend did not strip me of this garment of strength," replied *He-Man*, as he tore the ancient cell door from its hinges.



Having mastered more of the castle's detection devices, *Skeletor* was aware of his foes' escape.

"The fools have evaded one trap only to be prey to others more deadly," he bragged, as he activated the control near his throne.

In response, empty suits of armor moved to the weapons rack, taking instruments of death from its cache. Then they marched toward *He-Man* and *Teela*.



Wanting to watch his enemies' defeat, *Skeletor* took the Power Sword and stepped back from the throne.

He-man continued to battle the moving but lifeless army. When one armor fell another took its place.

Enjoying *He-Man*'s almost sure defeat, *Skeletor* forgot about the warrior-goddess. Then suddenly he felt a hard blow from *Teela*'s spear. Something fell from *Skeletor*'s hand. "My Power Sword!" he screamed.



As the Power Sword hit the floor, it split back into halves. Moments later, the remaining suits of armor crashed uselessly to the floor. There was no time for *Skeletor* to reach the Power Sword.

"Now I must escape!" cried the would-be-king.

Bolting to the upper level of the castle, *Skeletor* reached the ladder that led to the parapets.

His angered enemies were in close pursuit.



Reaching the roof, Skeletor saw the castle's laser-cannon. Leaping to the weapon he aimed it at the pursuing warrior and warrior-goddess.

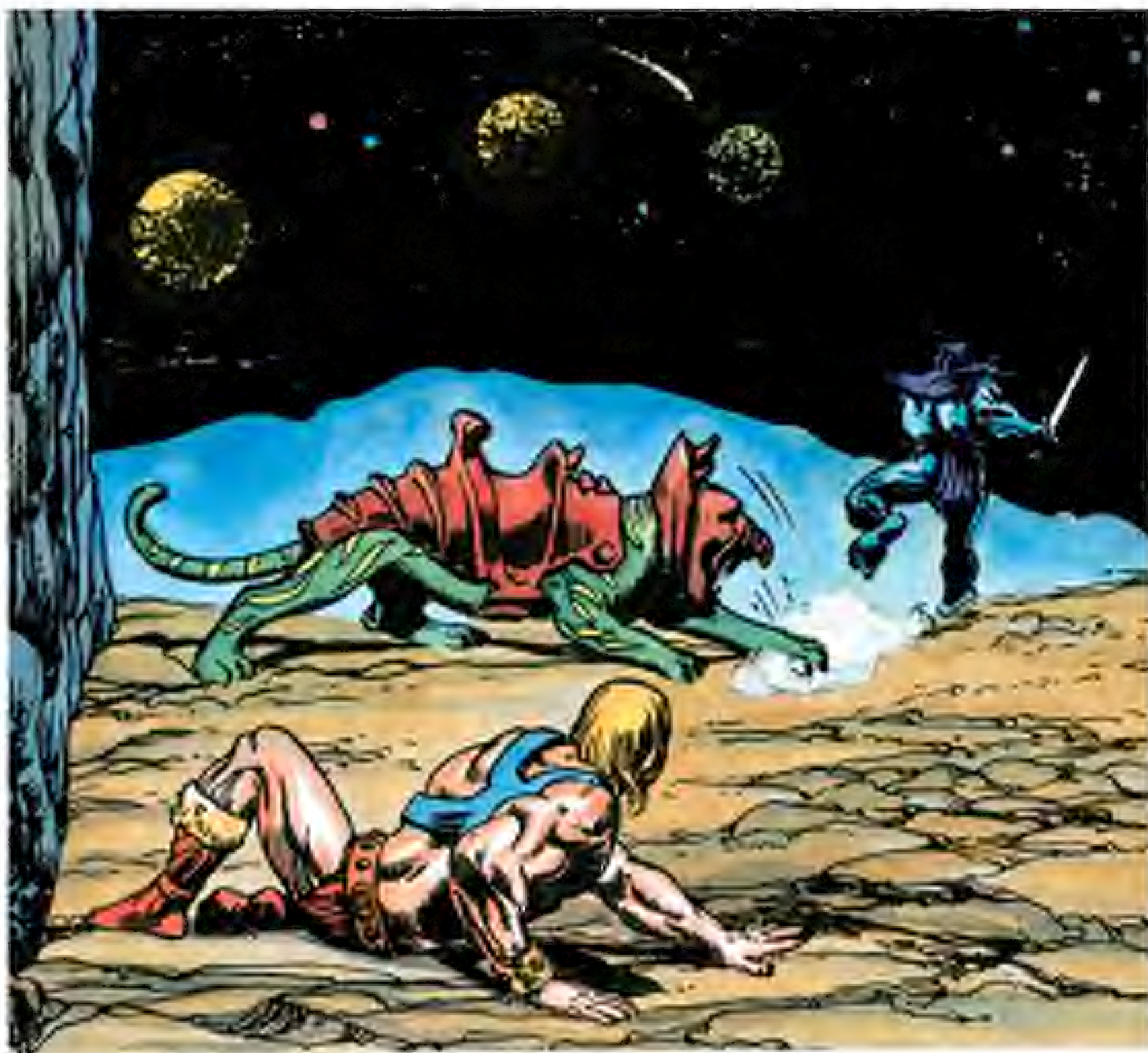
"Down!" *He-Man* shouted to *Teela*, as deadly energy bolts blasted at them. He felt the heat of the beam and smelled the singeing of his hair. "If that ray hits us, we'll be burned to ashes!"

Skeletor fired again.



There was no time for delay. In a blurred movement *He-Man* lunged forward with a speed incredible for a man his size. With a powerful shove, he turned the laser-cannon's direction of fire. Less than a moment later, *He-Man* was upon his worst enemy!

"The battle ends now," said *He-Man*, as their struggle brought them ever-closer to the parapet's edge. Nothing could prevent their fall.



He-Man's super-strength garment absorbed the impact of the fall, but *Skeletor* would not accept defeat. He might have destroyed *He-Man* with the energy-blade, had he not heard a guttural scream!

"*He-Man's Battle Cat!*" cried *Skeletor*, as the great feline lashed at him with a paw. *Battle Cat* did not have to make a second swipe, for the once King of *Castle Gray-skull* was fleeing for his life.



With Skeletor departed, the *Spirit of the Castle* appeared again. "I must make sure that the halves of the Power Sword are never again used for evil," said the chilling voice. "I shall send them into another dimension where even clever Skeletor will have great difficulty finding them."

He-Man and *Teela* watched the divided Power Sword shimmer with eerie energy and then fade away.



"Centuries may pass before the true king comes to claim his throne and fulfill the prophecy of the legend," said the *Spirit*. "Go then, *Masters of the Universe*, and fight evil wherever you find it!"

He-Man and *Teela* did as ordered. As they departed, the *Spirit of the Castle* seemed to smile, knowing that at the proper time *He-Man* would prove himself to be the true *King of Castle Grayskull*.



BATTLE IN THE CLOUDS

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE™





On the tallest peak of the Planet Eternia's mightiest mountain perched a watchful *Master of the Universe*, the winged one — *Stratos*.

He listened to the whistling wind, and he heard the echoes of an angry voice. "I crave power! I was born to rule all of Eternia!" *Stratos* recognized the voice as that of the evil *Skeletor*, and he flew off to see if he could locate the sounds that he had heard.



The sound took *Stratos* to *Castle Grayskull*. *He-Man* and the fiendish *Skeletor* were locked in a gory battle. *Stratos* saw *He-Man* use the *Battle Ram* to blast *Skeletor's* lightning weapon from his hand. He heard the villain yell, as powerful energies shocked him. *He-Man* seemed to be winning the fight.

Other eyes watched the battle, too...*Mer-Man*, the sea creature, one of *Skeletor's* underlings.



"You are a fool, Skeletor! You can never defeat me as long as I possess my Battle Ram and this suit that increases my strength!" exclaimed *He-Man*. With that, he demonstrated the value of the suit by hurling Skeletor through the air toward the sea.

Mer-Man cast a greedy eye. "With *He-Man*'s weapons I could be Skeletor's equal. I will help Skeletor."

So saying, *Mer-Man* headed toward the water.



Stratos saw that *He-Man* needed no help, so he turned in flight and headed for his mountain home.

"That cursed demon!" roared *Skeletor*, as *Mer-Man* struggled to pull him from the sea. "He will pay and pay dearly for this deed! That I vow!"

"I can help you defeat *He-Man*," grinned *Mer-Man*, "and for my reward I want his weapons?"

"They are yours if we win!" agreed *Skeletor*.



"Hark, *Stratos*!" called *He-Man*, as he spotted the warrior in mid-air. "I did not know you were so near, friend..." But before *Stratos* could reply, he went into action, swooping down to lift the *Battle Ram* and *He-Man* above the twin blasts that were blazing from *Mer-Man* and *Skeletor's* weapons.

"I am glad I heard your call," said *Stratos*.

"Not as glad as I," replied *He-Man*.



A great gust of wind toppled *He-Man* from the *Battle Ram*. Only his super garment had prevented his death, but he was unconscious. Unaware of *He-Man's* fall, *Stratos* flew on, battling the gale.

"If we are to climb those heights, we will need more than legs," growled *Mer-Man*.

"And I know where to get what we need," leered the sinister *Skeletor*. "Yes I know what to do!"



"You have your transportation! Now go after *He-Man*! I will watch this beauty," smiled *Skeletor*.

"Yes, master," replied *Mer-Man*, "and when I return I will have *He-Man* and his weapons!"

Teela gasped in horror, as *Skeletor's* energy blade struck her animal, sending it in a gallop toward the mountain where *He-Man* lay unconscious.

"Fiend! You'll never win!" screamed *Teela*.



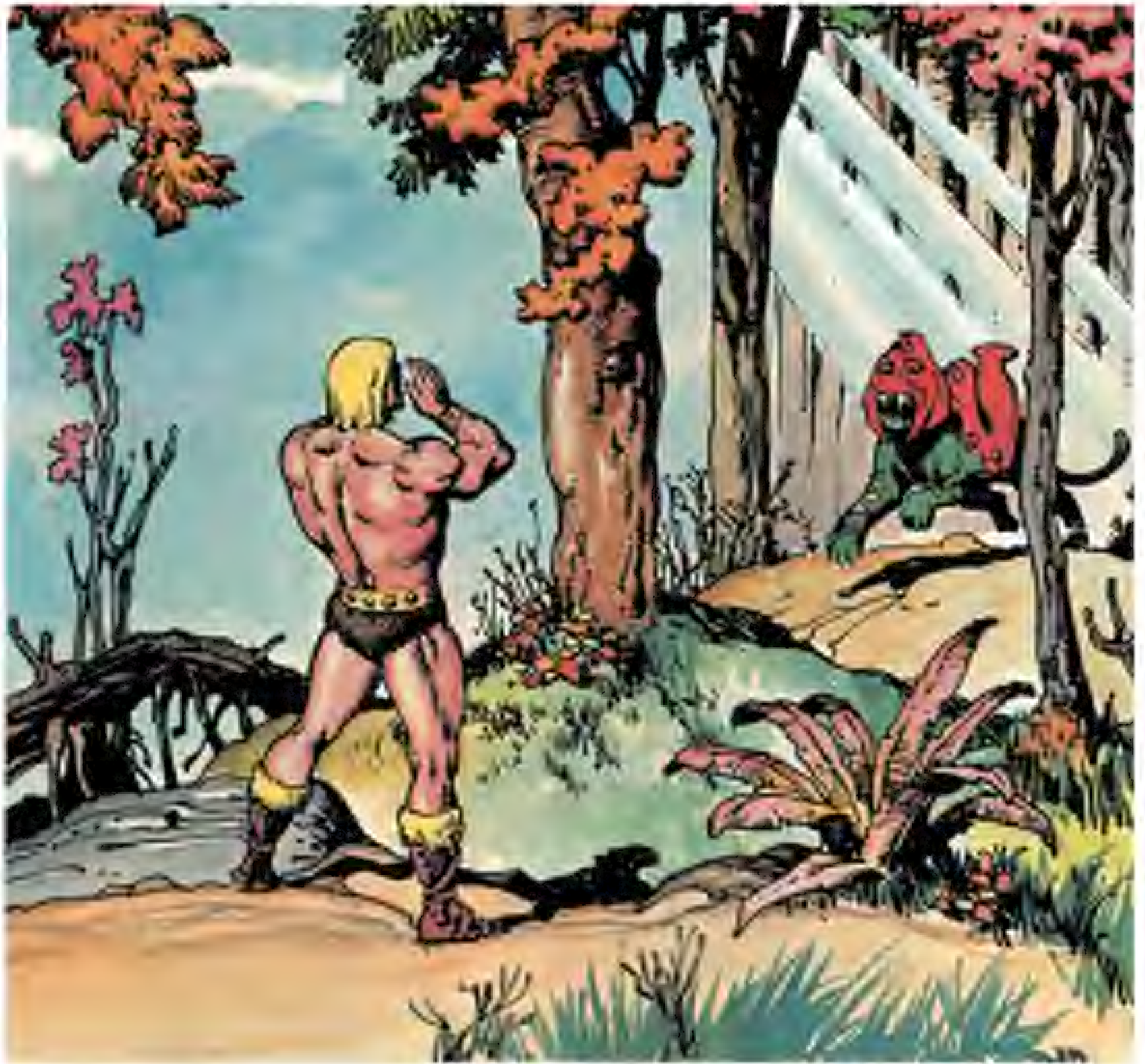
By the time *He-Man* was coming out of his dazed condition, *Mer-Man* had reached a place from which he could make a swift attack.

"A super-strength suit does not have a forcefield," thought *Mer-Man*. Dismounting from the horse, he picked up a huge boulder and hurled it at the half-conscious *He-Man*. "All I have to do is rip off that suit and it is mine!" *Mer-Man* said.



The *Master of the Universe* was no match for a wild man who had used savage means to cripple him. And as *Mer-Man* ripped off *He-Man*'s strength garment, he gloated, "Now, *He-Man*, you are unarmed! And I am super-strong! Soon I will possess your *Battle Ram* and then I will return to deal with you!"

"Fiend! What have you done with *Teela*?" *He-Man* struggled to ask. *Mer-Man* did not reply.



He-Man pretended complete defeat until *Mer-Man* departed. "If I am to reach *Stratos* and find where he put my *Battle Ram*, I am going to need help," he thought. Then he cupped his hands to his mouth and gave an animal call toward the forest.

In response, something powerful gave a deep growl and bolted from the woods. "Come," *He-Man* commanded, and *Battle Cat* sprang to his master.



He-Man leaped to the back of *Battle Cat*. Soon the beast was bounding obediently across the rugged terrain, stopping at *He-Man*'s home just long enough for *He-Man* to put on his forcefield suit. Moments later, they were rapidly approaching Eternia's *Master of Weapons*, *Man-At-Arms*.

"I need your help!" called *He-Man* to a waiting armored figure. "The situation is grave!"



"Indeed it must be grave for the mighty *He-Man* to ask for help," replied *Man-At-Arms*. "I will join you in your battle against evil!"

As *He-Man* explained *Mer-Man*'s plot and *Teela*'s certain danger, *Man-At-Arms* climbed aboard his incredible *Wind Raider*. Soon they were on their way to *Stratos*'s mountain to stop *Mer-Man* from capturing *He-Man*'s *Battle Ram*.



Finally they reached the end of their journey, but *Mer-Man* had seen them coming and he vanished amid the twisting clouds.

"I fear that your *Battle Cat* would never survive the climb," *Man-At-Arms* said to *He-Man*.

"I agree," sighed *He-Man*. Patting the animal's sinewy hide, he said, "Go back to your forest. This ascent must be made with a steed of metal."



With a whimper, strangely out of character for its size and fierce appearance, *Battle Cat* obeyed his master. When he turned to look back, *He-Man* had already entered *Man-At-Arms'* *Wind Raider*.

"I prefer my own *Battle Ram*," said *He-Man*.

"Ah, but could your *Battle Ram* so easily get up this rocky slope?" asked *Man-At-Arms*. Knowing it could not, *He-Man* remained silent.



Meanwhile, *Mer-Man* had found the *Battle Ram* and he pondered the weapons on it. "I wonder what this button will produce," he said, groping at one of the *Battle Ram*'s controls. Had he not quickly jumped aside, *Mer-Man* would have been blasted by a deadly laser-gun.

"With this I can easily conquer *He-Man* and even *Skeletor*," he boasted. "I would not even need that strength suit!"



As Mer-Man mastered the *Battle Ram*'s operation, He-Man became more determined to get back his property. Yet, as the *Wind Raider* continued its ascent, the steepness of the mountain slowed it almost to a halt. He-Man hung on to Man-At-Arms for dear life.

"Like my *Battle Cat*, your *Wind Raider* cannot make the climb," chided He-Man. "If I had my super suit for strength, I could carry us the rest of the way."



"No need for your *Battle Cat*," *Man-At-Arms* replied. "Brute strength must oftentimes give way to science. Hold on tighter, friend!"

Man-At-Arms worked the *Wind Raider's* controls. The vehicle's wings leveled in the wind, and rapidly the ship rose into the chilled air.

"Your point has been taken," said *He-Man*, his voice swept by the speed, "but must we fly so fast?"



Reaching the mountain's summit, *He-Man* and *Man-At-Arms* were greeted by a volley of deadly rays.

"I had not expected you to follow me," yelled the man of the sea, "but I was ready any way. I have had time to learn how to use your weapons!"

Mer-Man continued to blast his enemies.

"The *Battle Ram* can destroy us!" *He-Man* said.

"Do not be so sure!" replied *Man-At-Arms*.



Taking the offensive, *Man-At-Arms* flew his machine directly at *Mer-Man* and the *Battle Ram*. But *Mer-Man* maneuvered out of the way, then turned his ship, firing its battering device.

"Argghh...!" groaned *Man-At-Arms*, as he was struck hard and flung from the *Wind Raider*.

He-Man reacted with remembered horror, as *Man-At-Arms* dropped toward the rocky ground.



Only *Man-At-Arms*' remarkable armor saved him from death. Looking up, he saw the battle between *He-Man* and *Mer-Man* just beginning.

"Only one of us will survive this battle!" *He-Man* vowed, aiming the *Wind Raider* directly at the *Battle Ram*. "And it will not be you, *Mer-Man*!"

The two vehicles collided like a pair of battering rams, but both ships survived the impact.



The battle raged in the clouds, with *He-Man* and *Mer-Man* locked in mortal combat. But suddenly, from nowhere, *Stratos*, with wings folded behind his back, dropped from the sky. Now it was *Mer-Man*'s turn to be knocked senseless. The *Battle Ram*'s weapons were silenced, as its evil pilot lost control and fell.

"When I found you missing, I dropped your machine and returned to find you," *Stratos* called out.



"Now that you found me and it," yelled *He-Man*, "get ready to use it! After I take my strength suit from *Mer-Man*, we must find *Teela*, rescue *Man-At-Arms* from a ledge, and then let *Skelefor* know that he and his underling have met another defeat."

Riding off on the wonderful vehicles, *Stratos* called to *He-Man*, "Sometimes steeds of metal and machinery beat wings and wits." Both smiled.



THE VENGEANCE OF SKELETOR

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE





Of all the beings of the planet Eternia, none was as evil as skull-faced *Skeletor*. There was no good in him.

He stood defiantly on the rim of an active volcano, and using his energy-blade, he dared to fight with the lightning that flashed about him. The hatred in his heart was as searing as the volcano's belching smoke.

"I thirst for vengeance!" *Skeletor* shouted, as the sky responded with a loud crash of thunder.



Skeletor's mind was tormented by hated images. "It is because of *He-Man* that I have, time and time again, suffered shameful defeat!" he roared. "I would have succeeded in my attempt to rule this planet if not for him and his noble companions-in-battle."

As he spoke, *Skeletor* also thought of *Teela*, the beautiful warrior-goddess, and of armored *Man-At-Arms*, the master of all weapons.



At that moment, *Skeletor* made the only decision that was open to him. If he was going to rule Eternia, he had to destroy his worst enemy. *He-Man* must die!

With the mystic power of his energy-blade, *Skeletor* sent his image to his two most obedient underlings. Soon, his ghostly face appeared in Eternia's densest jungle.

"*Beast Man*," said the image, "I have work for you!"

"I am coming, master," roared the apelike brute.



The image also appeared in another domain, that of *Mer-Man*, Skeletor's scaly underling of the sea.

"What do you command me to do, master?" asked *Mer-Man*, humbly submitting to his master's will.

"You are to go to *Castle Grayskull*," answered the scheming *Skeletor*. "It is there that I shall tell you exactly what you must do...and you will do it!"

"I will be there," replied *Mer-Man*.



The three sinister beings met in the shadow of *Castle Grayskull*, that ancient place of wonders that was built by unknown hands sometime before the Great Wars.

"We are here to serve you," grunted *Beast Man*.

"What you command, we shall do," added *Mer-Man*.

"You will seek out *He-Man*, and then," *Skeletor* almost smiled, "before he can use one of his super-weapons against you, you will destroy him!"



Soon afterwards, a fantastic vehicle sped across the craggy terrain on a cushion of air. Riding the *Battle Ram* was *He-Man*, dressed in the suit that made his already great strength stronger. His thoughts were of *Teela*, whom he was to meet at a place around the next bend.

He-Man could not know that two fiendish beings were waiting for him in ambush. When he heard their screams it was already too late for him to battle back.



With incredible speed and force, *Mer-Man* kicked *He-Man* from the *Battle Ram*, then he jumped aside. *He-Man* recovered quickly, grabbed *Mer-Man* and tossed him toward a rock. Then *Beast Man's* weapon blazed.

"You two never learn!" said *He-Man*, as he side-stepped some of the blast from *Beast Man's* weapon.

However, *He-Man's* boast was cut short by another burst from *Beast Man's* powerful weapon.



The sounds of the battle were heard beyond the ridge. Teela, riding her galloping horse, arrived on the scene to see *Beast Man* regaining his senses. But what concerned her the most was *Mer-Man* who had *He-Man* across his shoulder. *He-Man* was unconscious, perhaps dead.

"There is nothing we can do now," Teela said to her steed, "but wait and hope that *He-Man* still lives." She held great fear in her heart.



For many miles, *Mer-Man* carried his burden, and never once did *He-Man* move. At last, as dawn's light crept over the land, the scaly servant of *Skeletor* reached his destination. The sea was choppy and angry.

"I never looked for it," *Mer-Man* laughed, as he tossed *He-Man* into the cold water, "but I've heard that there is no bottom in this sea. It would be interesting to learn if it is true, but you will not be the one to tell!"



If *Mer-Man* had not run off to report his success to *Skeletor*, he could have witnessed a miracle taking place below the water.

The icy waters quickly revived *He-Man*, but as his eyes opened, he beheld a new terror. A monster of the depths was swiftly making its way through the water.

Holding his breath, *He-Man* fought his way to the surface for air, as the terrible thing swam after him.



He-Man fought for his life. But despite his super-human strength, he felt his power leaving him. The monster's tentacles wrapped tighter and tighter, and *He-Man's* life was being squeezed to an end.

Yet, as *He-Man* struggled there was another inhabitant of this domain who had vengeance in his blood. It was *Stratos*, the winged-lord, and like *He-Man* and *Teela*, he fought on the side of good.



"Hold on for just a few moments longer," shouted Stratos, as he dived into the icy water, following his weapon's path. The weapon had released a stream of flame that not even the sea could put out. *He-Man* felt the tentacles relax and pull away from his body.

Then, weak and in need of breath, *He-Man* sank in the water. But Stratos dived deeper too, and pulled *He-Man* to the surface, and airlifted him to shore.



When *He-Man* regained his breath, he was resting on an island of stone. "Those assassins left me for dead. No doubt *Skeletor* is already laughing over my death!"

Stratos grinned. "Then perhaps it is time for us to show *Skeletor* just *who* will enjoy the last laugh," he said as he offered *He-Man* his warrior's grip.

"*Teela* must be worried," *He-Man* spoke. "If she saw the ambush, she must think I am dead!"



"Thank the Universal Powers that you are alive!" Teela exclaimed. "Tell me what happened."

After *He-Man* explained the events of the night, He changed into his suit that generated its own forcefield.

"We must go after those evil ones," vowed *Stratos*, "if we are to find out who is laughing."

"Beast Man ran off toward *Castle Grayskull*," said Teela. "I am sure *Mer-Man* went there, too."



At the castle, *Skeletor* enjoyed every grisly detail about *He-Man's* defeat. "How sweet is my revenge!" he shouted. "Now nothing can stop my plans of conquest! At last the one who threatened me is now cold fish food at the bottom of the sea!"

"Cold? Would you care to feel my temperature, *Skeletor*?" mocked the familiar voice of *He-Man*.

Turning, *Skeletor* saw the foe he believed to be dead.



"I don't know how you escaped death," raved Skeletor. "But you will not do so again! Slay him and his friends! Now! Do it!" Skeletor's command was firm.

Beast Man, Skeletor's number one underling, leaped with the prowess of a great forest ape. However, his dull-witted mind had forgotten *He-Man's* forcefield.

And as *Beast Man* fell with a loud thud, *Mer-Man* was making his own attack. *Teela* was in grave danger.



Before *Stratos* could complete his defense, *Mer-Man* yelled defiantly, "This is where the sea conquers the sky!" *Mer-Man's* weapon shot out a stream of sea water that instantly cooled to ice.

His wings too heavy to keep him in the air, *Stratos* aimed his body at *Mer-Man*. "If I must fall, I will take you with me," he shouted. He fell fast, hitting the man of the sea with a mighty impact.



Beast Man was still determined to please *Skeletor*. Reviving, he arose with a mean growl, beat his chest and raised his weapon toward *Stratos*. "Now you die!" he growled, "then the rest of you will die, too!"

Mer-Man did not want to be outdone by *Beast Man*, and he aimed his weapon at *He-Man*, who jumped aside. However, *Mer-Man*'s icy weapon found a target and *Beast Man* was caught in a barrage of pellets.



After Skeletor saw his two most powerful henchmen fall, he turned to the sea-being and shouted, "You bungling fools. You should have blasted *Stratos*! Now you will feel *my* fire - both of you!"

From Skeletor's weapon came a blast that enveloped Mer-Man's sea-bred body. So intense was the heat that it dried up the moisture in Mer-Man's scaly hide and the man of the sea felt himself slowly dying.



As much as *He-Man* hated *Skeletor*, he hated more to see a master do harm to a slave. Mounted on the *Battle Ram*, *He-Man* collided with *Skeletor*, disarming him.

And *Mer-Man* lost no time using what strength he had left to turn his own weapon on himself. Bathed in the sea water that would restore his strength, he gloated to himself, "You will regret this favor, *He-Man*!"

Teela and *Stratos* watched in disbelief.

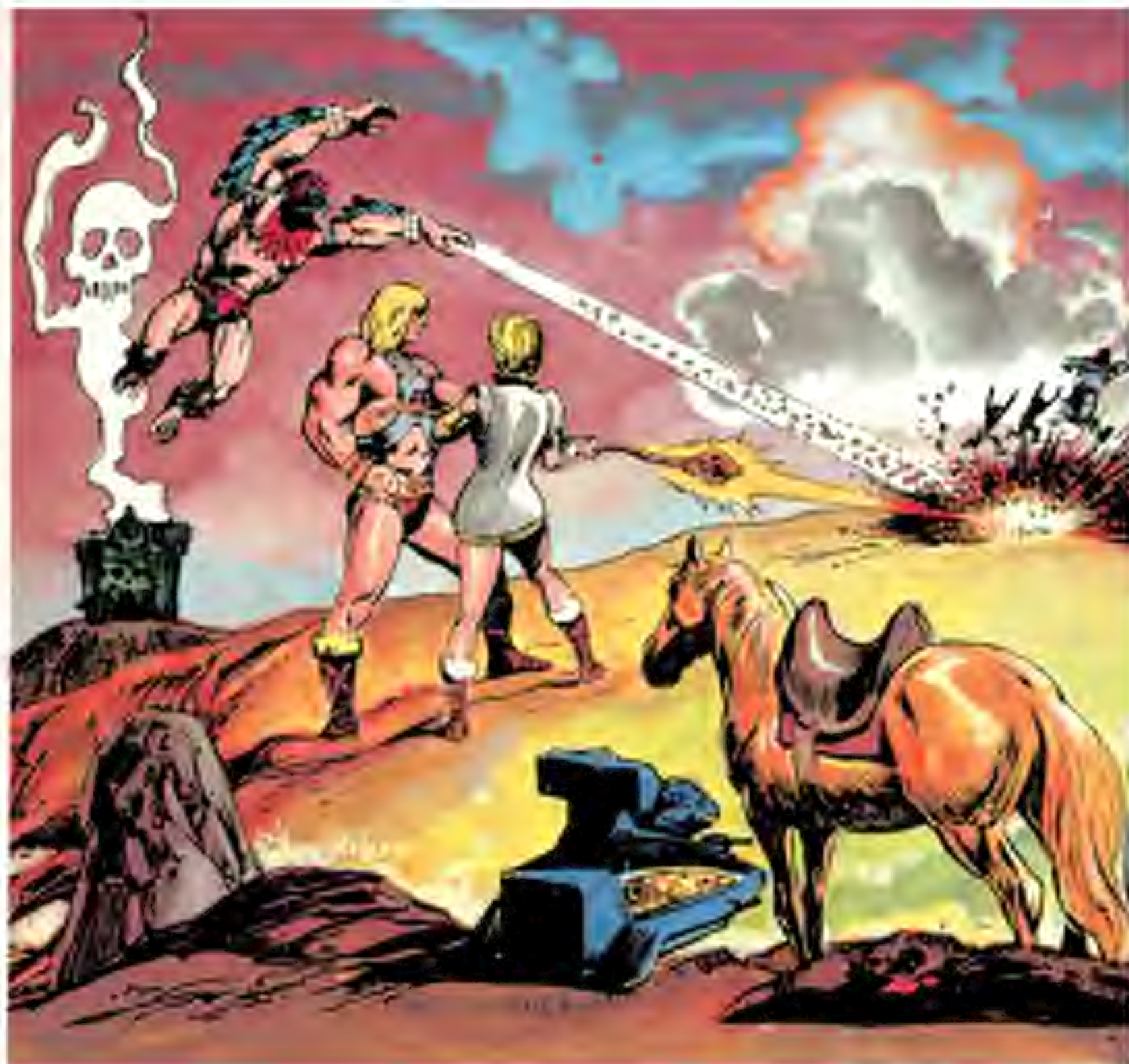


Minutes passed, and finally a battered Skeletor got up to find his henchmen looking at him strangely.

"Before you think of rising up against me, you foolish underlings, consider this!" *Skeletor* shouted.

Whatever thoughts the two might have had were soon forgotten, as a blast of energy from *Skeletor's* weapon exploded under their feet.

"Master! You are the master!" they yelled together.



"Thank you, 'Master!'" mocked *He-Man*, "for giving us such a great idea." Then together, *He-Man*, *Teela* and *Stratos* trained their weapons on the villains, sending them fleeing like cowards from *Castle Grayskull*.

"No doubt they will invent new plots of evil," said the *Spirit of the Castle*, appearing. "But you, the *Masters of the Universe*, will be ready for them."

"Indeed, we shall be!" agreed *He-Man* with fervor!

You are a classically trained painter and a true legend in the comic book world. Could you talk a bit about how you got into the comics business?

I attended the High School of Art and Design in Manhattan back in the late seventies, where I was introduced to great artists teaching all disciplines, like animation, comic books, and advertising, while I took to oil painting studies under Max Gribburg and Irving Greenburg.

I started to show my work to Joel Orlando and Virnie Colletta at DC Comics at around the age of seventeen. It was there at DC that I bumped into Richard Buckler, who was able to use me as a background assistant, allowing me to learn the principles of storytelling and structure. I was eventually hired to work on *House of Mystery*, *He-Man for Mazel*, *Warlord* (following Mike Grell), *He-Man*, and other titles, while I continued my oil painting and monitored classes at the Art Students League.

Your run on the Masters of the Universe minicomics featured memorable stories like *The Magic Stealer*, *The Terror of Tri-Klops*, *The Tale of Teela*, and several others. What led to the job of illustrating the minicomics for Mattel? What was the experience like for you?

It was a gig like any other. This one was a licensed title, so I was paid more, but Mattel owned all the artwork. It was fun to delve into that book's universe!



What influences did you draw from when illustrating the He-Man minicomics?

I had so many early influences, like Hal Foster's *Prince Valiant*, Neal Adams's *Conan*, Jack Kirby's *Kamandi*, Gil Kane's work on *Maz-Zat*, and so, so many others!

You've worked on beloved and iconic characters, such as the Incredible Hulk, Thor, Spider-Man, Conan, Swamp Thing, and many others. How would you say He-Man compares to some of these other great characters?

He-Man's universe was similar to Robert F. Howard's world. Having read "Red Nails" and other stories allowed me to bring these yet-unrealized characters and scripts to life, since I was one of the first artists on the book! *Brainviewer's* note: The first artist was actually Alfredo Alcala, who illustrated the first four storybook-style minis, written by Don Glut. Teixeira was the first to pencil the comic-style minis.





If you were given total freedom to do your own Masters of the Universe story, what would you do?

I would like to work with great writers, like Neil Gaiman or Frank Miller for anyone else, for that matter, to possibly work up a violently wondrous adventure which would involve many battles and struggles to save his beloved queen, as well as his children's lives and the entire kingdom, against a more threatening adversary who uses Sholex to raise up an ever-growing viral army, threatening the universe's end to the point of no return—and somehow leaving the conclusion up to the writer. (Heh)

You make guest appearances at comic conventions. Are you still approached by fans of your Masters of the Universe minicomics?

Yes, and I sign every copy brought to me. The copies' containers vary from mint to rayoned all over and ripped almost to ruin—all happily kept from each collector's childhood! ☺





ON A WORLD FAR FROM EARTH
IN TIME AND SPACE, THE MIGHTIEST
HERO, HE-MAN OF ETERNIA,
FACES A NEW CHALLENGE!

BUT LITTLE DOES THE CHAMPION
SUSPECT THAT THE CONFRONTATION
IS OBSERVED BY HIS ARCH-FOE,
SKELETOR, AND HIS BRUTAL
HENCHMAN, BEASTMAN!

"HE-MAN MEETS RAM MAN"

GAZE INTO THE MYSTIC
MISTS OF VISION AND
BEHOLD WHAT TRANSPIRES
WHEN THE ACCURSED
HE-MAN
ENCOUNTERS
AN UNTRIED
OPPONENT!

GO AWAY!
YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED
TO BE HERE! I'M
RAM-MAN AND THIS
IS MY PLACE!

I MEAN YOU
NO HARM, GOOD
FELLOW! I MERELY
WISH TO PASS-- I
AM ON A MOST
URGENT MISSION TO...

WRITER: GARY COHN
PENCILS: MARK TEXEIRA
INKS: TOD SMITH
COLOR: ANTHONY TOLIN

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YES! AND I, THE NOBLE SKELETOR, HAVE LEARNED WHERE THE FIEND LIVES! WE CAN TAKE HIM BY SURPRISE! WE WILL BECOME GREAT HEROES, AND EVERYONE WILL LOVE US...

... BUT WE NEED YOUR HELP!

YOU DO? THEN YOU'LL HAVE IT!

THEIR DESTINATION IS CASTLE GRAYSKULL -- BEHIND WHOSE WALLS ARE HIDDEN THE SECRETS THAT CAN ENSURE MASTERY OVER ALL ETERNIA!

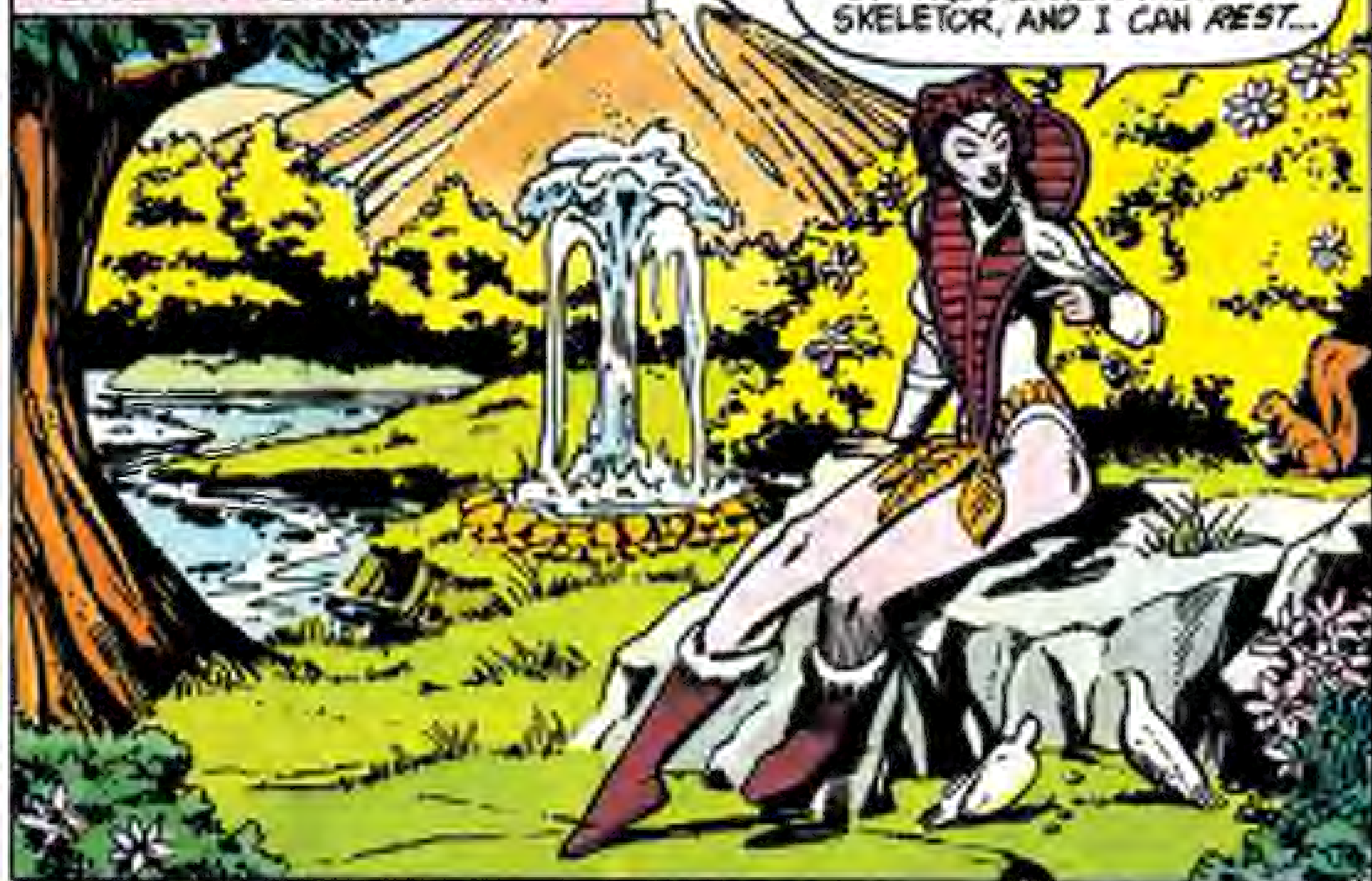
BEHOLD, RAM-MAN! THE HOME OF OUR ENEMY -- HE-MAN! HE IS IN THE CASTLE LAUGHING AT YOU!

MAKE HIM STOP, RAM-MAN!

I'LL MAKE HIM... STOP LAUGHING!

ELSEWHERE ON ETERNIA, THERE ARE PLACES OF LUSH WONDER AND BEAUTY... AND IN ONE OF THEM, THE SORCERESS FINDS PEACE AND CONTENTMENT.

IT IS MOMENTS LIKE THIS I CHERISH MOST-- WHEN THE WORLD IS FREE OF THE DEPREDATIONS OF SKELETOR, AND I CAN REST...



BUT SUDDENLY...

WAIT--! I SENSE A DISTURBANCE! CAN IT BE ETERNIA IS ONCE AGAIN ENDANGERED?

I WILL USE MY SORCERY TO REVEAL THE SOURCE OF THE UPHEAVAL!



OH NO! SKELETOR
ATTACKS THE GATES OF
CASTLE GRAYSKULL ONCE
AGAIN, SEEKING THE
SECRETS THAT WILL
ENABLE HIM TO
CONQUER ETERNIA!

AND THIS TIME IT LOOKS
LIKE HE MIGHT SUCCEED!



I MUST FIND
HE-MAN-- ONLY
HE CAN STOP
SKELETOR AND
HIS POWERFUL
NEW HENCHMAN
IN TIME!



AND WITH A
FLASH OF MYSTIC
ENERGIES, SHE'S
GONE!



SKELETOR IS NOT THE ONLY
THREAT TO ETERNIA! IN A
SMALL VILLAGE, HE-MAN
FACES ANOTHER
EVIL BEING!

POUNCE!

BACK, FOUL
MONSTER! NO MORE
SHALL YOU PREY UPON
THESE POOR PEOPLE!
NOW YOU FACE THE
POWER OF--
HE-MAN!

HA!
SO ENDS THE
PERIL OF THIS
DREADFUL
BEAST!



MEANWHILE, AT CASTLE GRAYSKULL...

OWWW! PLEASE, SKELETOR! LET ME STOP -- I NEED TO REST!

NO, YOU FOOL! KEEP GOING!



AHH-- THAT BE BRILLIANT, MASTER! BUT IT SEEMS THE EFFORT WILL KILL HIM!

WHO CARES, ONCE HE HAS ACCOMPLISHED HIS PURPOSE! HA HA HA!



WHAM WHAM

NOO! LET ME STOP... PLEASE!

WHAM

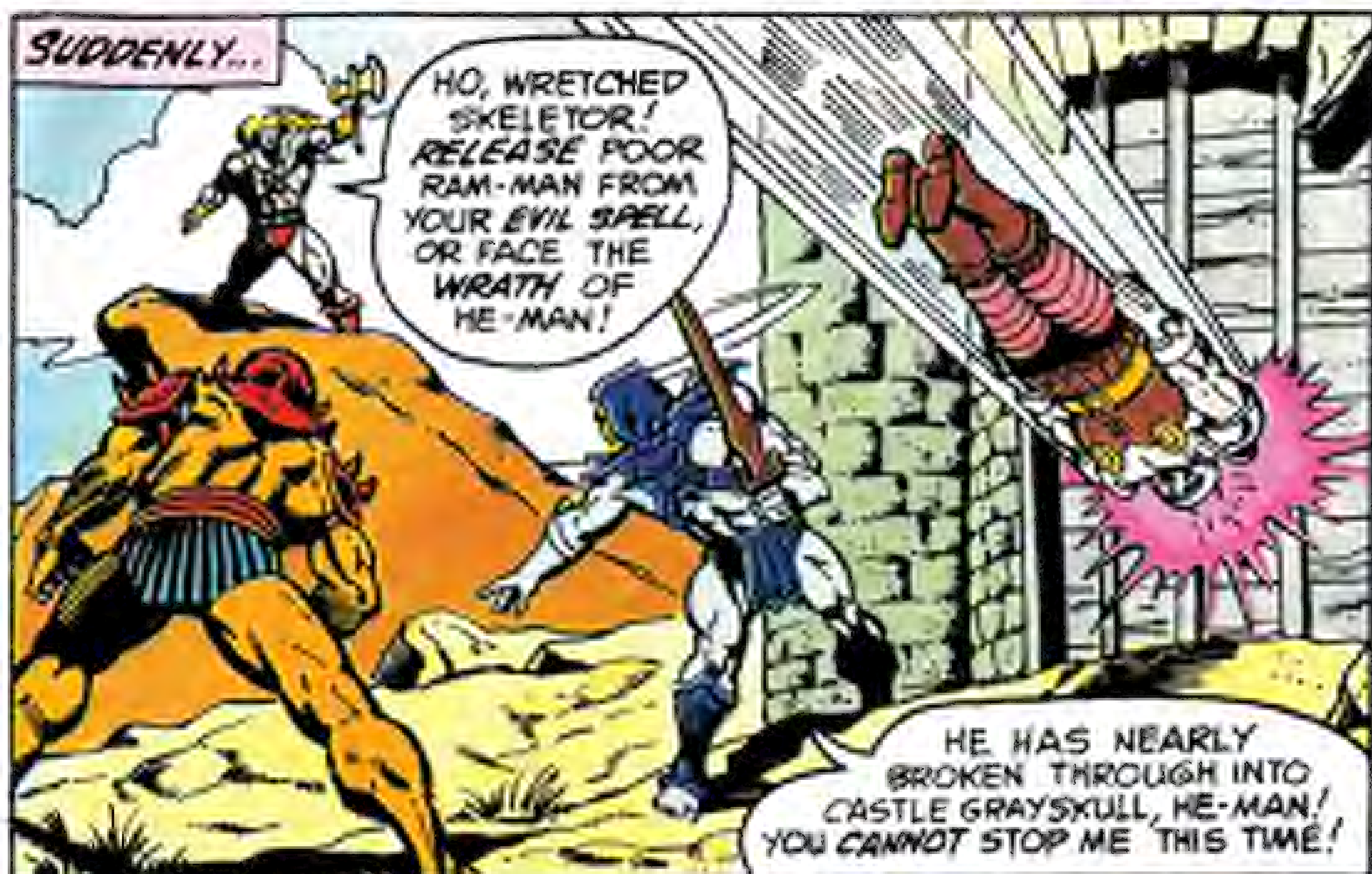
MASTER! --HE THINKS HE CANNOT SUCCEED!

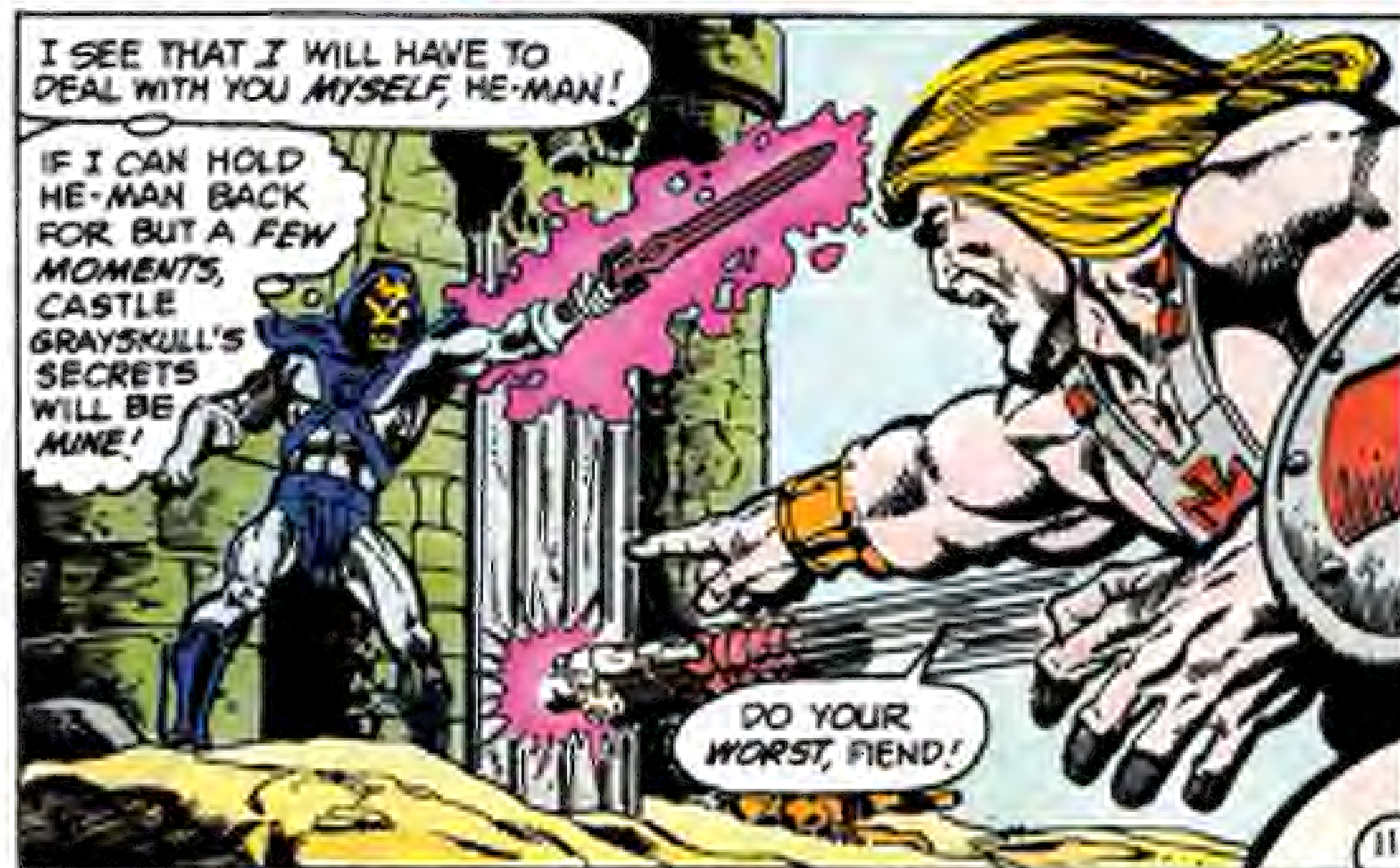
FOR ONCE YOU MAY BE RIGHT! BUT WE CANNOT ALLOW HIM TO STOP, CAN WE?

ZAP!



-- NOT WHEN A LITTLE MYSTICAL ENERGY FROM MY POWER SWORD CAN HELP HIM! HA HA!





BUT IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE, A NEW THOUGHT OCCURS TO SKELETOR!

**BEASTMAN STIRS!
--IF HE HITS HE-MAN
FROM BEHIND AND
I BLAST THE
ACCURSED HERO
WITH ALL MY POWER
--WE CAN DEFEAT
HIM AT LAST!**



AT LAST! NOW, OLD ROE,
I WILL PUT AN END TO
YOUR PATHETIC
EXISTENCE!
HA HA
HA!



BUT SKELETOR HAS NOT YET
REALIZED THAT WHEN HE
BLASTED HE-MAN, HE USED
MYSTIC ENERGY THAT HELD
RAM-MAN IN THRALL!

NOW RAM-MAN
IS FREE...

SKELETOR... HURT
ME! AND NOW HE
WANTS TO HURT
HE-MAN...!



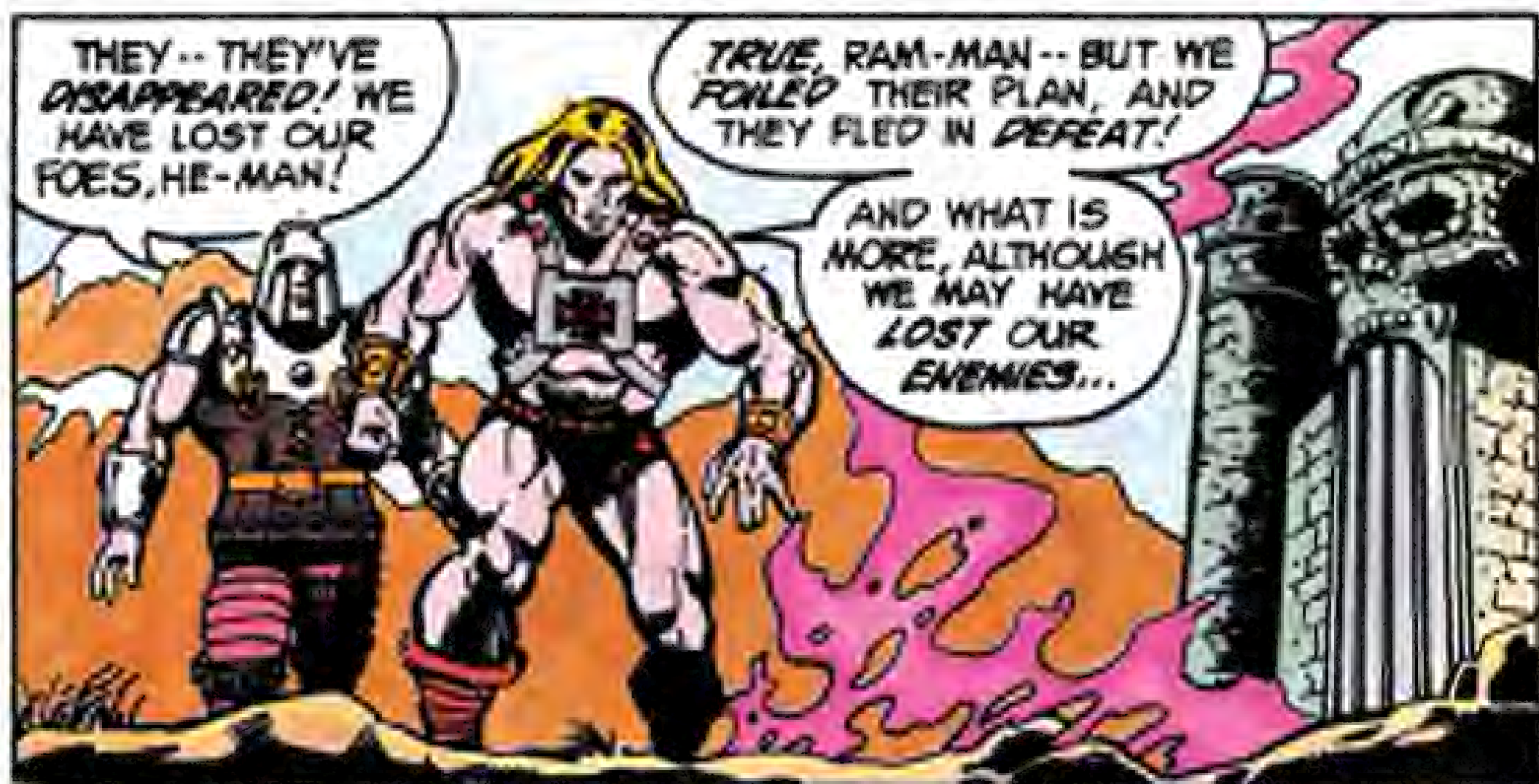
...AND HE'S ANGRY!

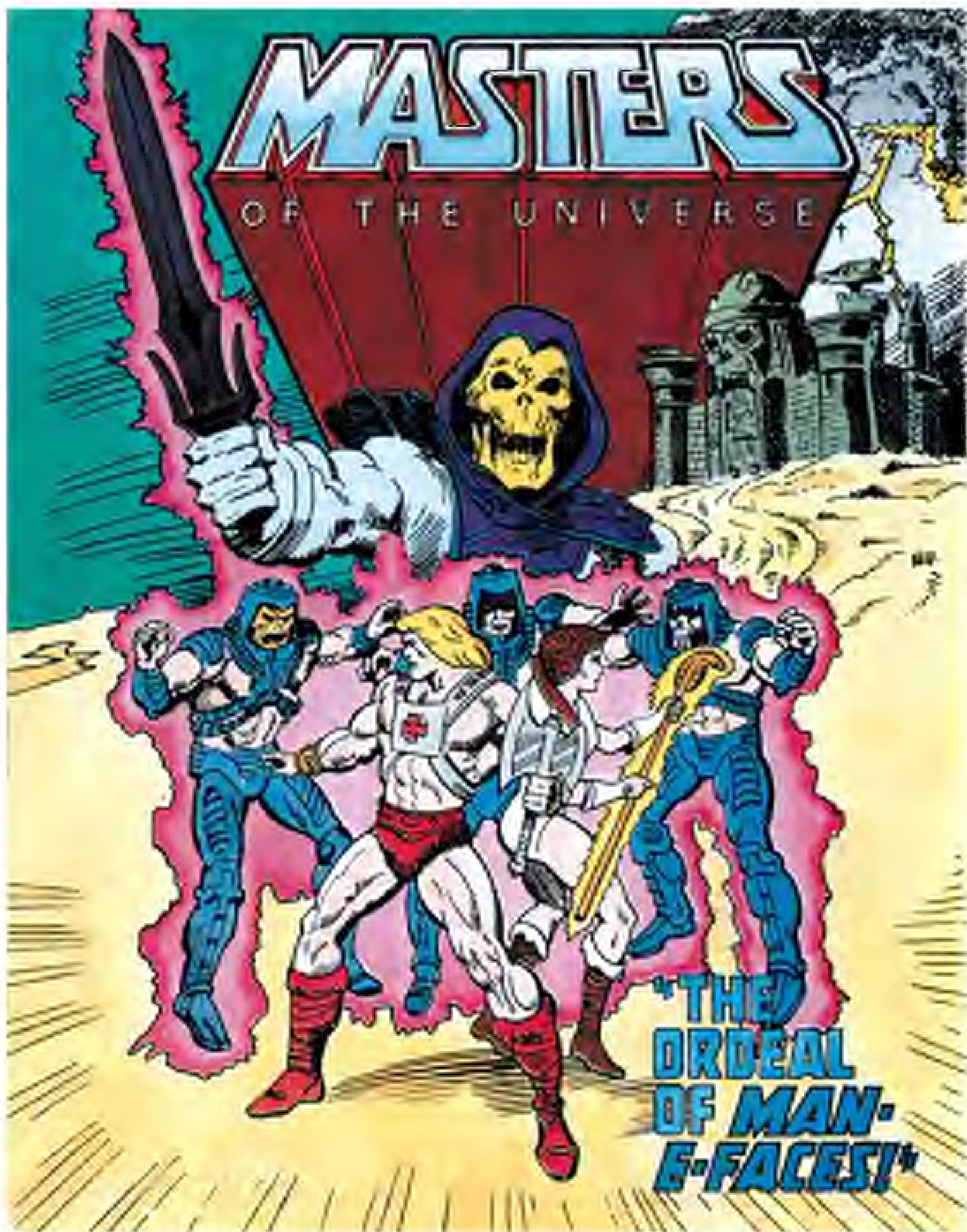
NO! I
WON'T LET
YOU HURT
HE-MAN!

MEERAGH









MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

"THE ORDEAL OF MAN-E-FACES!"

AT THE ROYAL PALACE OF ETERNIA, NOBILITY AND COMMONFOLK ALIKE ENJOY A FESTIVE MOMENT... A PERFORMANCE BY THE FAMED ACTOR, MAN-E-FACES!

BUT AMONG THE JOYFUL CROWD IS ONE WHO HAS COME NOT TO BE ENTERTAINED... BUT TO WREAK HAVOC!

HO, BUT THIS MERRY FARCE IS GREAT SPORT! THAT ACTOR BRINGS WONDROUS LIFE TO ALL HIS ROLES!

YES, HE MAN, BUT I WONDER WHAT HIS REAL FACE IS LIKE!

THIS MAN OF MANY IDENTITIES DOES INSPIRE ME WITH A NEW STRATAGEM!

WRITER: GARY CONN
PENCILS: MARK TEXEIRA
INKS: TOD SMITH
COLOR: ANTHONY TOLLY





MAN-E-FACES UNDERGOES A TERRIBLE TRANSFORMATION! AND WHEN IT IS COMPLETED...









FAR AWAY THE SORCERESS'S AID IS BESEECHED
BY A MESSAGE FROM HE-MAN.

FALCON! WHAT WORD
DO YOU BRING?

HE-MAN SUMMONS
YOU-- THE WARRIOR-WOMAN
TEELA HAS BEEN CAPTURED
BY THE EVIL SKELETOR!

THIS IS HARD
NEWS! OF COURSE
I WILL HELP!

I HEED YOUR CALL,
HE-MAN! COME--WE
MUST TRAVEL TO THE
EVIL ONE'S LAIR WITH
DUE HASTE!

YOU MUST
STAY HERE,
MAN-AT-ARMS--
FOR IF I FAIL,
THE PROTECTION
OF ETERNIA WILL
BE YOUR CHARGE!







I--I'M HUMAN AGAIN--
NO MORE MONSTER!



FORGIVE ME, WARRIOR-WOMAN! I MEANT
YOU NO HARM!

REST, ACTOR--YOU
WERE MERELY THE VICTIM
OF SKELETOR! BUT NOW...



...I MUST HELP
MY MIGHTY
COMRADE HE-MAN
AGAINST THE
DEMON!

NO! I CANNOT
WITHSTAND THE
ATTACK OF *BOTH* OF
THESE GREAT FIGHTERS!

10

BUT THE SORCERESS' BATTLE DOES NOT FARE AS WELL!

HA! THE POWER SWORD TURNS MAN-E-FACES INTO MY SERVANT ONCE AGAIN!

GOOD, MASTER -- GOOD! LET ME REND AND TEAR!

NO, SKELETOR! I WILL NOT ALLOW YOU TO USE THIS POOR FELLOW FOR YOUR OWN WICKED ENDS!

HOW CAN YOU STOP ME!?

AND SO THE BATTLE RAGES BACK AND FORTH, WITH POOR MAN-E-FACES TRAPPED BETWEEN THE TWO MIGHTY MYSTICS...

NEITHER OPPONENT GAINS THE UPPER HAND, BUT FOR THE HAPLESS PERFORMER ALL THAT MATTERS IS THE AGONY OF HIS REPEATED TRANSFORMATIONS.





AND, AS FOR THE OTHER BATTLE...

THAT'S THE END
OF THE DEMON,
WARRIOR-WOMAN!

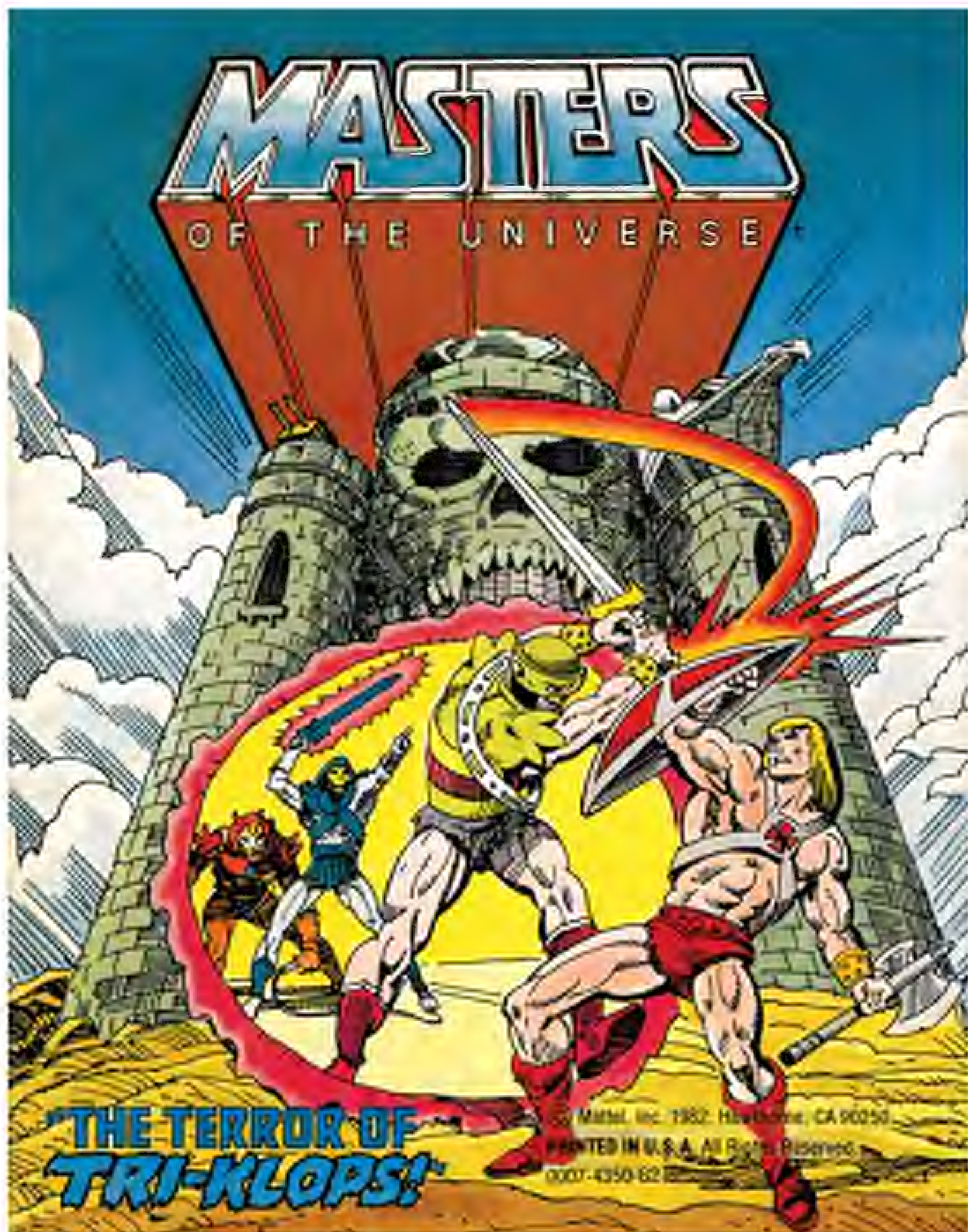
SUCH
CREATURES
CAN NEVER
STAND AGAINST
OUR COMBINED
MIGHT, HE-MAN!
AND NOW FOR
SKELETOR...!

NO, BEAUTEOUS
TEELA... EVEN I
AM NOT SO
FOOLHARDY AS TO
TRY TO FIGHT ALL THREE
OF YOU AT ONCE! FARE-
WELL... ACCURSED HEROES!

HE'S GONE!
ESCAPED
AGAIN!







THE TERROR of TRI-KLOPS!

WRITER: GARY COHN
PENCILS: MARK TEXEIRA
INKS: TOD SMITH
COLORS: ANTHONY TOLLIN

IN HIS SECRET LAIR SOMEWHERE DEEP
IN THE CAVERNS THAT HONEYCOMB
ETERNIA, SKELETOR SITS LOST IN
GRIM THOUGHT!

ALWAYS IT'S THE SAME--I DEVISE A PLAN
TO CONQUER CASTLE GRAYSKULL, TO
LEARN ITS SECRETS AND SO RULE
ETERNIA...

...AND THEN
THE CURSED
HE-MAN
FOILS MY
PLOT!



DESPITE MY VAST POWER, I
AM NOT A MATCH FOR HIM IN A
FIGHT! BUT SOMEWHERE THERE
MUST BE ONE WHO CAN DEFEAT
HIM... SOMEONE WHO CAN RID ME
OF THIS TROUBLESOME FOE!

AYE, MASTER!
PERHAPS THERE IS!
HAVE YE NOT HEARD
OF... TRI-KLOPS!?

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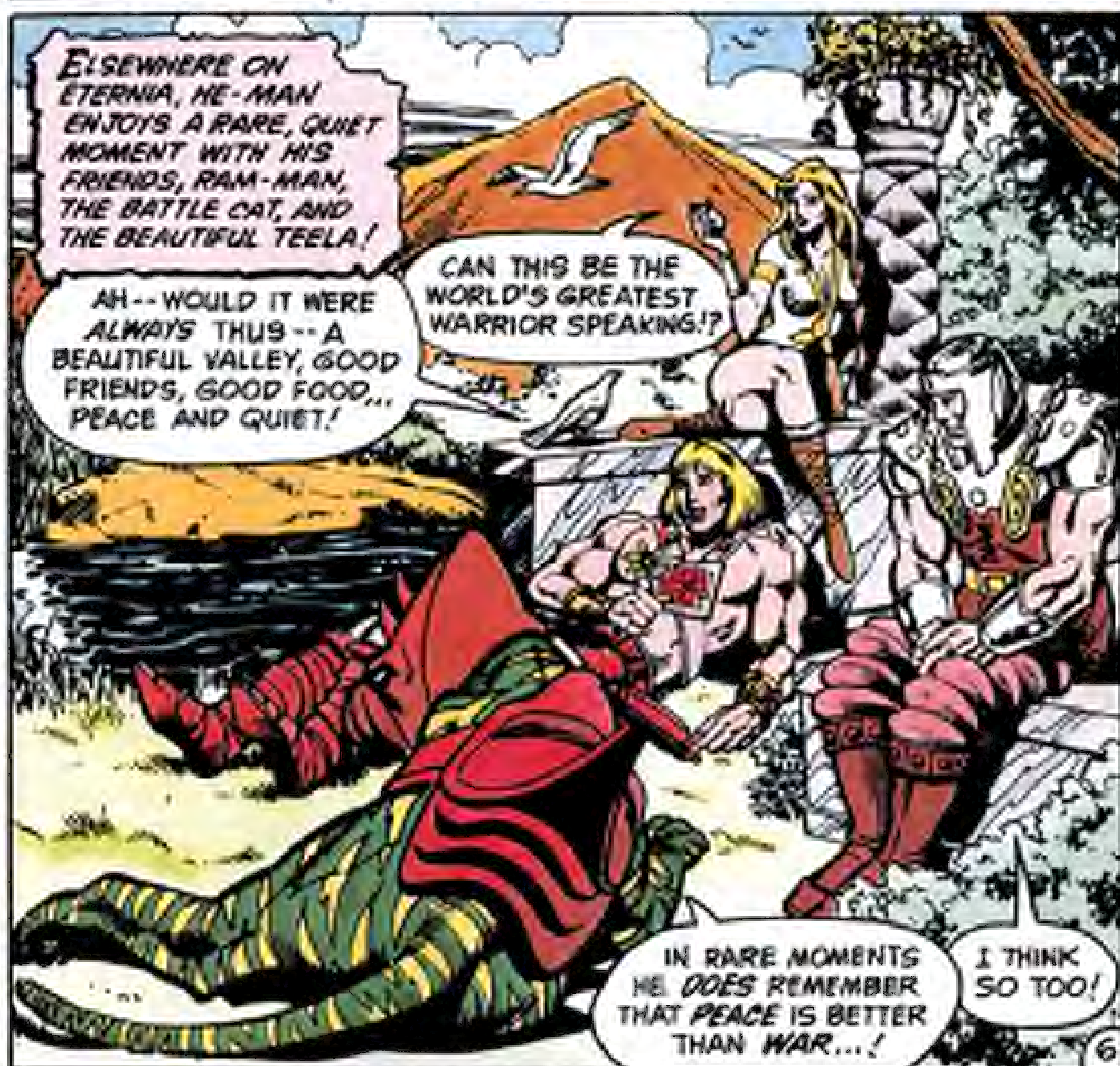








VERY WELL, SKELETOR!
I WILL AID YOU! BUT
IF YOU BETRAY ME...



ELSEWHERE ON
ETERNIA, HE-MAN
ENJOYS A RARE, QUIET
MOMENT WITH HIS
FRIENDS, RAM-MAN,
THE BATTLE CAT, AND
THE BEAUTIFUL TEELA!

AH-- WOULD IT WERE
ALWAYS THUS-- A
BEAUTIFUL VALLEY, GOOD
FRIENDS, GOOD FOOD...
PEACE AND QUIET!

CAN THIS BE THE
WORLD'S GREATEST
WARRIOR SPEAKING!?

IN RARE MOMENTS
HE DOES REMEMBER
THAT PEACE IS BETTER
THAN WAR...!

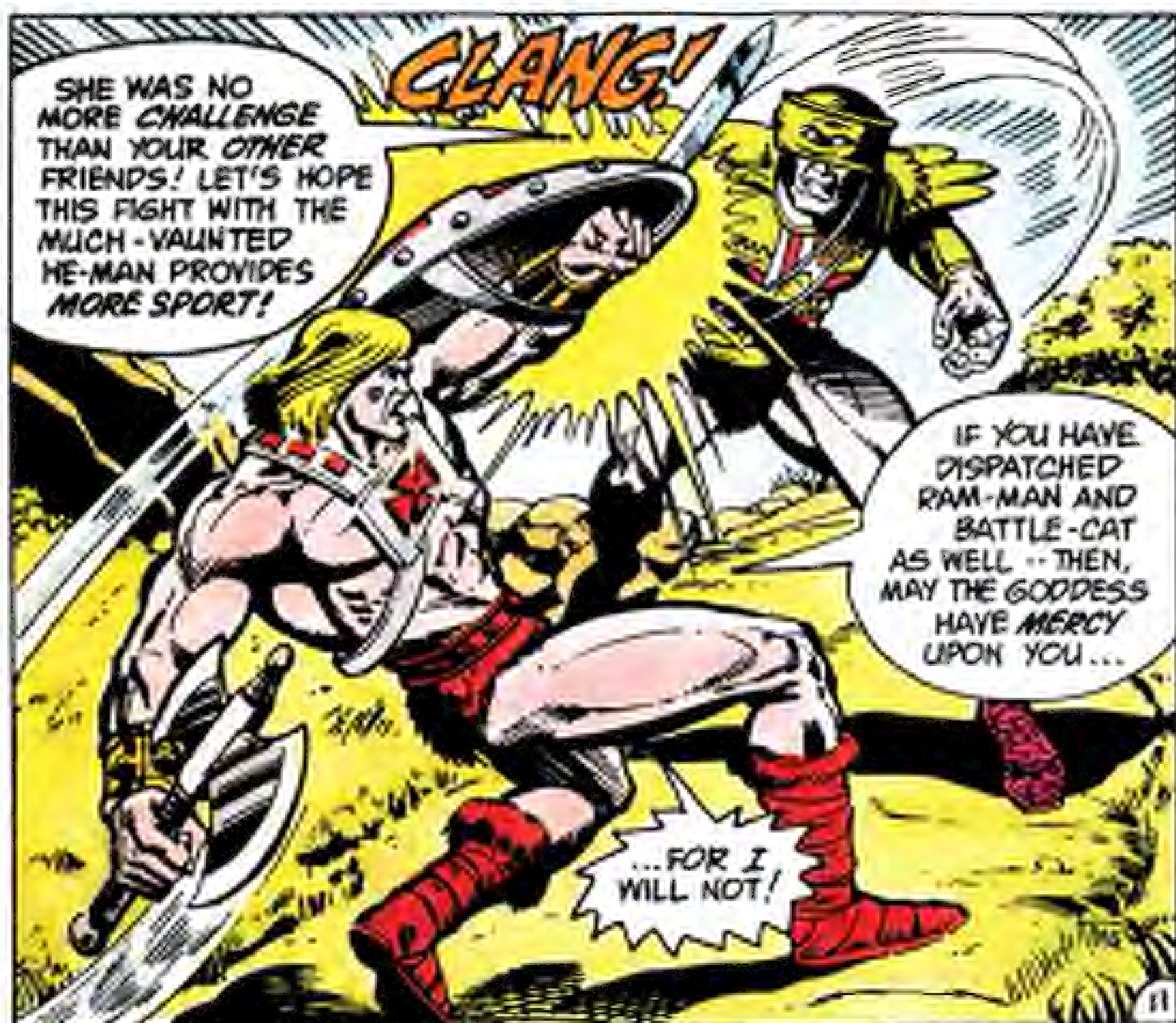
I THINK
SO TOO!



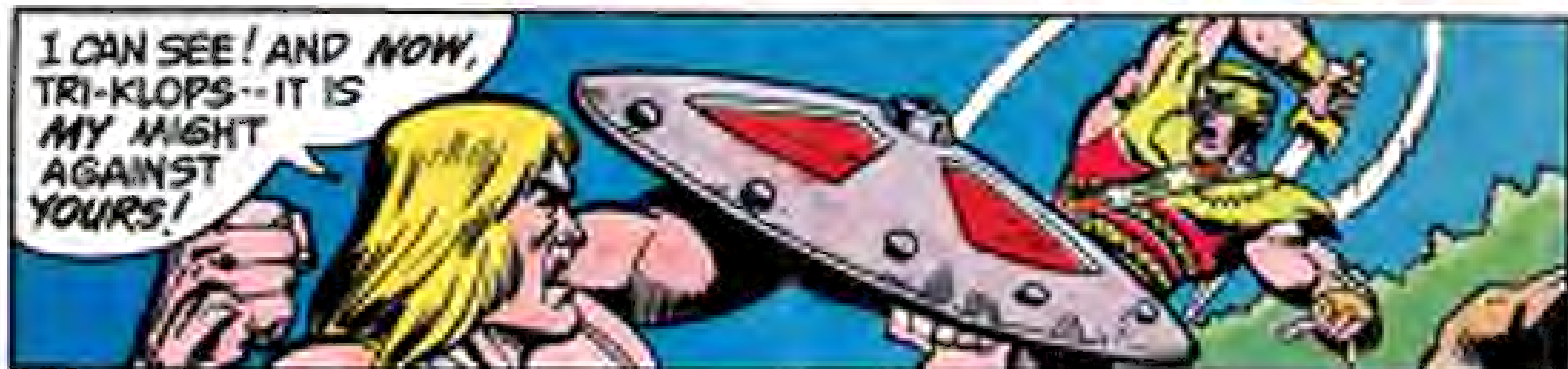














BUT SKELETOR HAS NOT RECKONED WITH THE AWESOME SPEED OF HE-MAN, AS ...



TZLAATT!

FEAR NOT, TRI-KLOPS -- NO BOLT FROM AFAR WILL STRIKE YOU DOWN WHILE I CAN DEFLECT IT!

BUT WHEN THE ATTACK IS OVER...



HE MUST HAVE HAD SOME MYSTICAL ABILITY OF HIS OWN! I SUSPECT WE HAVE NOT SEEN THE LAST OF TRI-KLOPS!

AND, IN A HIDDEN LAIR, FAR, FAR AWAY...

YOU HAVE FOILED ME ONCE AGAIN, HE-MAN! BUT SOMEDAY I WILL FIND A LACKEY THAT EVEN YOU CANNOT OVERCOME ... AND ON THAT DAY...



... SKELETOR SHALL EMERGE TRIUMPHANT!

THE END

MASTERS

OF THE UNIVERSE



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THE MENACE OF
TRAP JAW!

WITHIN CASTLE GRAYSKULL IS THE SECRET OF POWER! POWER THAT COULD MAKE THE EVIL SKELETOR THE RULER OF ALL ETERNIA! AND SO, FOR PERHAPS THE HUNDREDTH TIME, HE TRIES TO BREAK THROUGH THE MYSTIC BARRIERS THAT SEAL THE CASTLE!

AND, FOR THE HUNDREDTH TIME, SKELETOR FAILS!

SO THE MASTER OF DESTRUCTION HATCHES A PLAN... WILL IT SUCCEED, OR WILL IT UNLEASH...

IT IS HOPELESS! ALL MY POWER CANNOT OPEN THESE GATES!... BUT THERE MUST BE A WAY! THERE MUST!

THE MENACE OF TRAP JAW!

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WELL DO I KNOW THAT THERE ARE
WORLDS UPON WORLDS IN SPACE
AND TIME!

PERHAPS... YES, PERHAPS
I CAN ENTER THE CASTLE
WITHOUT EVEN USING
THE GATES!



OF COURSE! I WILL ENTER
THAT OTHER DIMENSION, TAKE
TEN PACES FORWARD, AND THEN
RETURN TO ETERNIA, WHERE I
WILL REAPPEAR... *INSIDE* THE
WALLS OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL!



THIS MUST SUCCEED THE
FIRST TIME, FOR I MAY
NEVER BE ABLE TO
RECREATE THE SPELL THAT
ALLOWS ME TO ENTER THIS NEW
DIMENSION! SUCH ARE THE
BIZARRE WORKINGS OF MAGIC!

2







THE ROYAL PALACE OF ETERNIA! IT HAS BEEN ALMOST AN HOUR SINCE THE FIRST TERRIBLE CONCUSSION REVERBERATED THROUGH ETERNIA! NOW, YET ANOTHER STRIKES, AS ETERNIA'S GREATEST HEROES HASTEN TOWARD AN URGENT MEETING!

ANOTHER SHOCK WAVE, HE-MAN! WHAT CAN BE THE CAUSE?

MAGIC, FAIR ONE! I FEAR I SEE SKELETOR'S HAND IN THIS!

GREAT HEROES-- THE FATE OF ETERNIA DEPENDS UPON YOU-- EACH SHOCK WAVE IS MORE DEVASTATING THAN THE ONE BEFORE!

THE DISTURBANCE HAS BEEN PINPOINTED AT CASTLE GRAYSKULL! YOU MUST END THIS THREAT...

...HERE IT DESTROYS OUR WORLD!

SOON, AT THE MYSTIC CASTLE GRAYSKULL!

HE-MAN, SKELETOR IS HERE, AS YOU FORETOLD!

YES... BUT HE APPEARS AS BEWILDERED AS WE! PERHAPS HE IS NOT...

HE-MAN, SKELETOR
IS HERE, AS
YOU FORETOLD!

YES... BUT HE
APPEARS AS
BEWILDERED
AS WE! PERHAPS
HE IS NOT...

SUDDENLY...

THOOM!

WE'RE FALLING!

ANOTHER SHOCK WAVE!

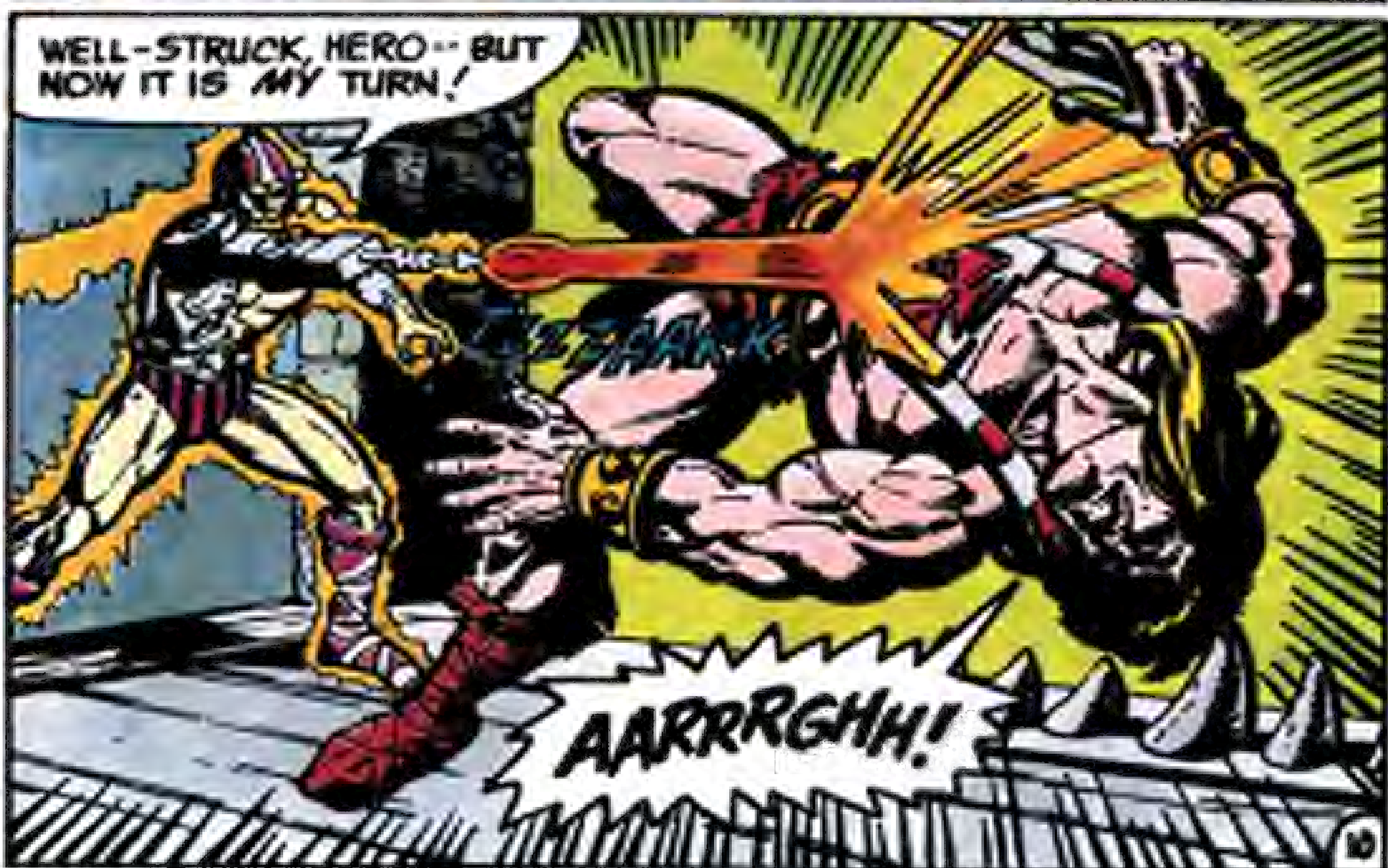
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WE'RE FALLING!

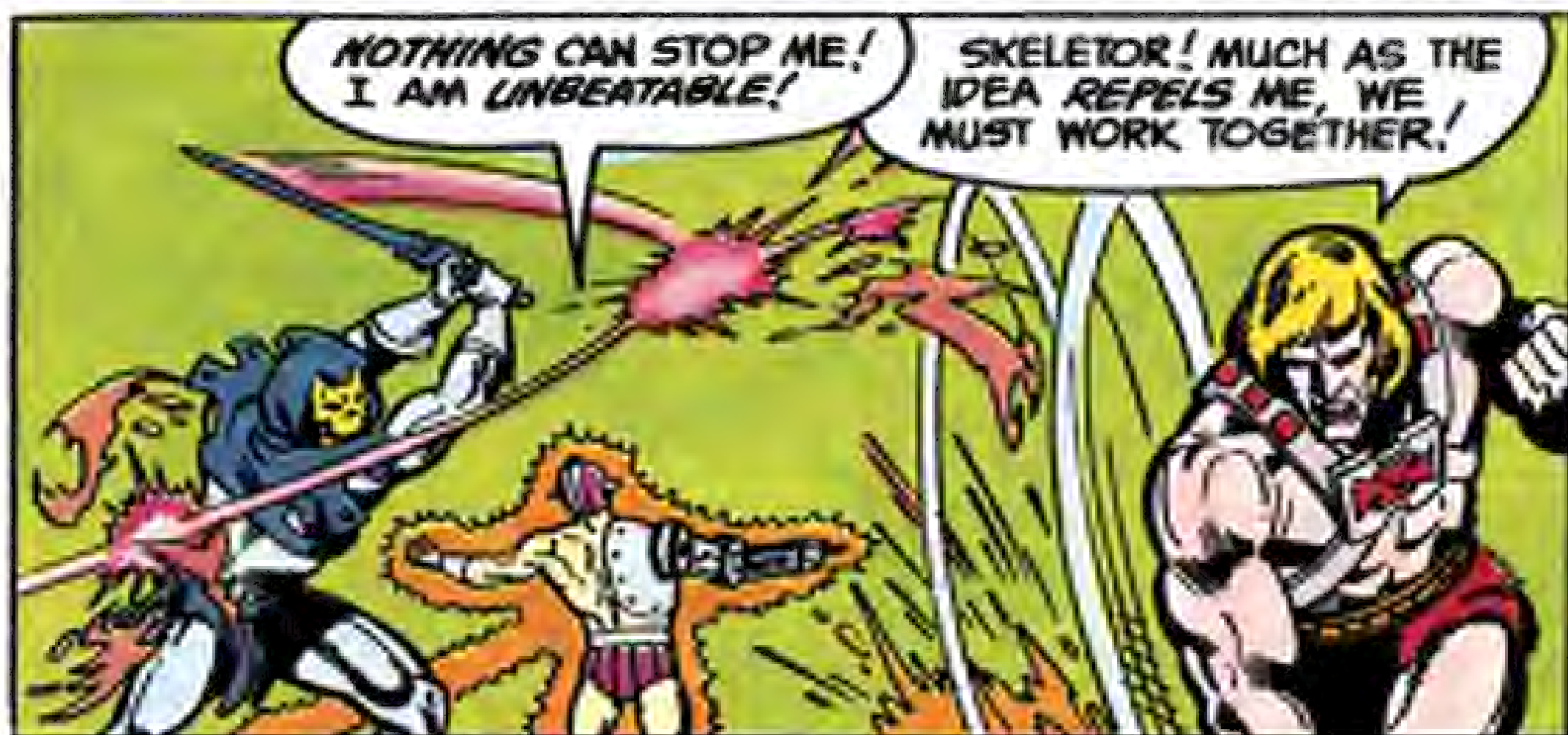
**ANOTHER
SHOCK
WAVE!**













UNABLE TO WITHSTAND THE
COMBINED MIGHT OF HE-
MAN AND SKELETOR, TRAP-
JAW IS A THREAT NO MORE!
BUT THEN...



NOW IS MY
CHANCE! THE CASTLE
LIES OPEN BEFORE
ME, AND NONE
STAND IN MY WAY!

TAKE HEED,
HEROES!
SKELETOR IS
GOING TO...



NO! IT CLOSES
TOO SOON!
-- CURSE THIS
CASTLE!

HA! THWARTED AGAIN,
EH, EVIL ONE? GNE
UP-- YOU'LL NEVER ENTER
CASTLE GRAYSKULL!



AND CURSE YOU,
HE-MAN! I'LL
MAKE YOU
SWALLOW
THOSE
MOCKING
WORDS!

BUT NOW I
DEPART, TAKING
THIS BLUNDERER
WITH ME AS A
NEW SERVANT!

THUS THE
ENCOUNTER
IS NOT A
TOTAL
LOSS!





When it comes to comics, you've written for iconic characters such as Green Lantern, Aquaman, and Blade. You also cocreated *Amerthyst, Princess of Gemworld* and the character Blue Devil. Could you talk a bit about your background as a writer? How did you get into comics?

I'd been saying I was a writer since childhood. In school I was always writing something, and when I got to Michigan State I was lucky enough to attend the Clarion SF Writers' Workshop and study with people like Theodore Sturgeon, Damon Knight, Kurt Vonnegut, Samuel R. Delany, and others. I was part of Clarion twice, once as a student and once as assistant to the director, R. Clement Wright, so I got a double dose. Damon bought a piece from me for his *Orbit 18* anthology, my first sale. Later I did grad work at Bowling Green State in Ohio, in the Department of Popular Culture Studies. My best friend, Dan Mohr, was also there, and we started brainstorming ideas and sending them to editors at DC. Jack C. Harris bought one, a few months later he bought another, and over the course of a year or so we became semi-regular contributors to the DC anthology comics. Eventually we visited DC (we were both from the suburbs of NYC) and started picking up more work. I moved to NYC to be able to visit the DC offices regularly, and it seemed that I was going to be a comics writer.

The Masters of the Universe minicomics you worked on were produced by DC Comics for Mattel. What led to your assignment to write these minicomics for Mattel?

I was in the DC offices looking for work. My friend Laurie Sutton was an editor (I'm pretty sure Laurie was the MOTU editor, but it might have been Dave Mazuk... Memories fade). "Cohn, wanna do some minicomics?" "Sure, what does it pay?" That's it.

What influences did you have in mind when you wrote the MOTU minicomics? Were you given much direction by Mattel or did you have free rein to tell the stories you wanted to tell?

What influences did I have in mind? Not anything consciously, but subconsciously everything I'd ever learned about myth, fantasy, archetypes, popular culture. I heard the story of how these figures had originally been designed for the Conan the Barbarian movie and Mattel was just trying to make back their investment. I looked at them and pronounced them among the ugliest and most ridiculous toys I'd ever seen. I thought "He-Man" was the silliest name for a character I'd ever heard. I said something like, "Were they even trying?" I applied that they were going to bomb... I have a great track record for not picking winners. I thought that Ninja Turtles and Power

Rangers were going to be reborn too, for much the same reasons. I took a look at the minibooks Don Glau had written. I was given info about which toys were supposed to be featured in each mini I was writing, and that was about it.

The characters in your MOTU minicomics speak in a heightened sword-and-sorcery style. This idea was later dropped in subsequent minicomics and in the cartoons. What inspired you to write the dialogue in this way?

I think I was copying the speech patterns of the previous minibooks. Understood that nothing about what I wrote for these minis stuck me (then, let alone, is "inspired." I thought the toys were ugly and stupid, but it was a way to play the part, and I wasn't in a position to say no to work. And it's always fun to make stuff up, so I was having fun making stuff up for the minis. I remember laughing a lot as I wrote the scripts and read them to my wife and friends. And it was fun to discuss the stories with Mark Trovati, who even at the start of his career was a very talented artist. I took this work very lightly and just played with what I was given. The people in charge of the project, from DC and Marvel, were happy with what I was doing, so I was satisfied, too.

Were there any stories you wanted to tell or any ideas you wanted to use that didn't make the final cut?

Nope. Ideas I didn't get to use? I don't remember. I would have liked to have done more, because it was easy and fun and paid pretty well (I think I got something like \$35/page, which was a decent rate for a newbie), but I had no attachment to MOTU. I had my own babies like *Born to Be Bad*, *Amethyst*, and *Alien Devil*, and my only real concerns were having enough work to make a living and getting to write the things I cared about. What I cared about were the things I created with Dan or by myself. I enjoyed collaborating with great artists like Tex, Ron Frenz, Pat Collins, and Ernie Colón. Those were my motivations as a comics writer. The success or failure of the MOTU toy line wouldn't have affected me one way or another, since I hadn't created anything for it. I wanted to do a good job so DC would be happy with me and give me more work, but other than that I had no attachment to He-Man and his friends.





The seven minicomics you worked on are beloved by many MOTU enthusiasts. *The Ordeal of Man-E-Faces!*, *He-Man Meets Ram-Man!*, *The Menace of Trap-Jaw!*, and the other minicomics you wrote are still referenced by fans. When did you become aware of the fan base for Masters of the Universe? Were you surprised to learn of the strong fan following MOTU still has today?

I was totally logged when I was contacted by a guy in the MOTU fan world who wanted to interview me for the Mini-Dotmii website. That was about ten years ago, and his interview is still floating around online. I had no idea anyone had any interest in the minic I'd written. I knew that the toy line had been hugely successful, that they'd spin off cartoons, a movie . . . but I had no sense of the fandom that existed until he contacted me online. So we talked by phone for an hour or so. I told him at greater length everything I've said here, and came away thinking ruefully that there were quite a few comics I was proud of having done, but the minis weren't among them at wasn't ashamed, either, I just didn't think they were

anything but throwaway stuff, but that it seemed the MOTU minis were the work I'd be remembered for. Pretty funny, actually.

What are you up to these days?

In my late forties I accepted that writing and comics were not going to ever give me a living. I became a New York City high-school teacher. I taught English and social studies and I coached fencing teams. I did that for almost fifteen years, and I retired last March. I moved from NYC to Richmond, Virginia, and I've started teaching part time at a small, private high school. I'm considering whether there's anything I want to write. I have many ideas, a couple of projects in the embryonic stage (including one with Fans Cul lins that I'd really like to see find a publisher). I fence, I do yoga, I ride my motorcycle. That's what I'm up to these days. ☺



MASTERS

OF THE UNIVERSE





SHE KNOWS THAT SHE IS TEELA, THE DAUGHTER OF MAN-AT-ARMS, AND ONE OF ETERNIA'S GREATEST HEROES. BUT OF HER MOTHER SHE KNOWS NOTHING, NOR HAS HER FATHER EVER BREATHED A WORD! AND SOMETIMES THIS TROUBLES HER, AND BRINGS HER... BAD DREAMS!

COME TO ME, TEELA! COME TO ME!

M-MOTHER?

THE ORIGIN OF THE WARRIOR WOMAN IS FAR STRANGER THAN SHE SUSPECTS, AS SHE WILL SOON LEARN!

THE TALE OF TEELA!

WRITER: GARY COHN
PENCILS: MARK TEXEIRA
INKS: TOP SMITH
COLOR: ANTHONY TOLLOV



UHHH!

SOMEONE... CALLING TO ME! MUST GO!



AND SO SHE RIDES IN ANSWER TO
A MYSTERIOUS VOICE THAT DIRECTS
HER! AND AT THE END OF HER RIDE
SHE FINDS...



WHAT SORCERY IS
THIS!? I TRAVELED THIS
ROAD JUST YESTERDAY,
AND YON STRUCTURE
WAS NOT THERE!



BUT BEFORE SHE CAN
EXPLORE THE BUILDING...







SKELETOR! WHAT TREACHERY DO YOU PLAY?

AH, FAIR TEELA! IT HAS TO DO WITH THIS PLACE--
POINT DREAD, AND YOUR BIRTH, TWENTY YEARS AGO!

MY--MY BIRTH!?

AYE, WARRIOR WOMAN! THIS OUTPOST IS A MYSTIC ARTIFACT, APPEARING ON THE FACE OF ETERNIA ONLY FOR A SHORT TIME EVERY TWENTY YEARS!

THE LAST TIME IT APPEARED I TAPPED ITS MAGICAL ENERGIES! THEN LURED THE GODDESS, TEELA, HERE...!



"MY PLAN WAS SIMPLE!... I WOULD CREATE A DUPLICATE OF THE GODDESS, USING HER POWER, BUT CONTROLLING HER DOUBLE WITH THE POWER OF MY WILL! I WOULD RAISE THIS DUPLICATE FROM AN INFANT, THEN TAKE HER AS MY BRIDE!

"TOGETHER WE WOULD CONQUER CASTLE GRAY-SKULL... AND ALL OF ETERNIA!"



"BUT THEN THAT MEDDLER, MAN-AT-ARMS, INTERFERED!"

STOP, EVIL ONE!
NO HARM MAY
COME TO THE
GODDESS WHILE
MAN-AT-ARMS
LIVES!



EH...? NO--
NOT NOW... I'M
SO CLOSE TO
VICTORY...!

"BUT ALAS, THE FOOL GOT LUCKY. I WAS FORCED TO RETREAT, AND HE FREED THE GODDESS! BUT STILL, I HAD SUCCEEDED IN DRAINING SOME OF HER POWER, WHICH WAS EMBODIED IN THE FORM OF AN INFANT!"



SKELETOR HAS BEEN DEFEATED, MILADY!

YES, NOBLE MAN-AT-ARMS... BUT
THERE IS STILL THE
PROBLEM OF THIS CHILD!
MY DUTIES DO NOT PERMIT
ME TO ATTEND TO HER--
SO I MUST LEAVE HER
IN YOUR CARE!

I WILL
RAISE HER AS
MY ONLY
DAUGHTER!



AND IF YOU WILL
PERMIT, NAME HER TEELA,
AFTER YOU, GODDESS!



MORNING AT THE ROYAL PALACE OF ETERNIA...

I CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHERE MY DAUGHTER HAS DISAPPEARED TO, FRIEND HE-MAN!

FEAR NOT, MAN-AT-ARMS!

















LATER... WELCOME MAN-AT-ARMS AND GODDESS! WHAT NEWS DO YOU BRING!?

WICKED SKELETOR HAS BEEN DEFEATED! ETERNIA IS SAFE AGAIN!

THAT IS GLAD TIDINGS! BUT WHAT OF TEELA?

SHE...

...IS...

...HERE!

IT FELT GLORIOUS TO BE WHOLE AGAIN! BUT TEELA HAS A LIFE OF HER OWN NOW, AND I WILL NOT DEPRIVE HER OF IT! AS FOR POINT DREAD AND THE TALON FIGHTER...

- We know this Teela is a clone of the Goddess and that the Goddess is also named Teela, as well.
- In the same page of the 1984 issue of DC's 1980s published comic mentioned, a reader points out a discrepancy with regard to Teela and the Goddess. The editor replies that they've produced merchandise as close as they can get to the original - a reference to the particular merchandise.



“... I WILL PUT IT WHERE
SKELETOR CAN NEVER
USE IT AGAIN... ATOP
CASTLE GRAYSKULL!”



AND SO THE HEROES OF
ETERNIA HAVE SAVED THE
DAY ONCE MORE!

THIS HAS BEEN A
GREAT VICTORY! BUT
WILL TEELA ALWAYS BE
TEELA...

...OR WILL SHE
SOMEDAY MERGE WITH
THE GODDESS
FOREVER!?

The End (15)

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE



THE MAGIC
STEALER!

THE MAGIC-STEALER!

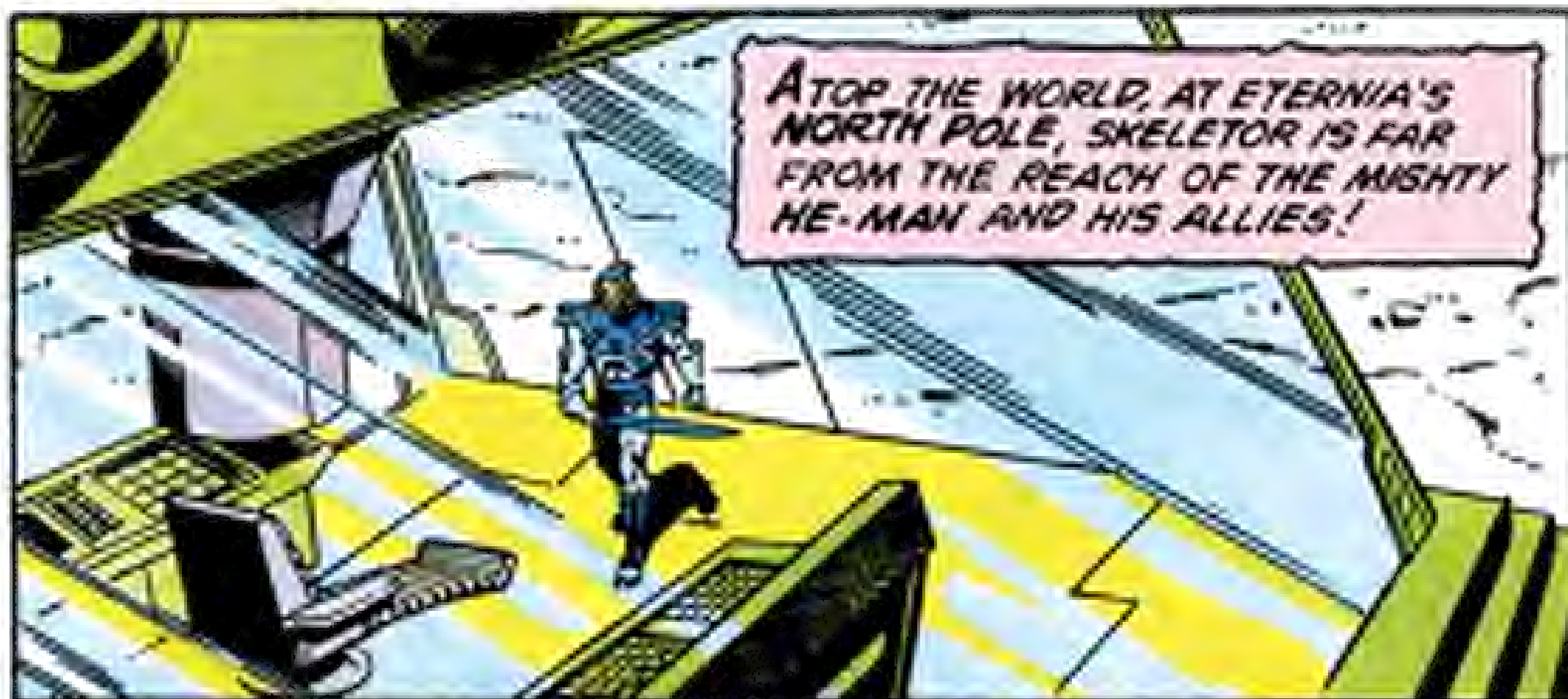
DESPITE ALL HIS MYSTIC MIGHT, SKELETOR, THE MASTER OF EVIL, HAS NEVER BEEN ABLE TO DEFEAT THE NOBLE HE-MAN, CHAMPION OF ETERNIA! BUT NOW HE HAS A NEW PLAN, MORE DANGEROUS THAN ANY HE HAS EVER HATCHED BEFORE!

THIS TIME I CANNOT FAIL! IN MY SEARCH FOR THE KEY TO CASTLE GRAYSKULL I HAVE STUMBLED UPON A FAR MORE POTENT SECRET!

WITH THIS DEVICE I CAN ABSORB ALL THE MAGIC FROM ETERNIA! AND THEN I WILL BE LIKE A GOD AMONG A WORLD OF RUNY MORTALS!

...I SHALL BE INVINCIBLE!

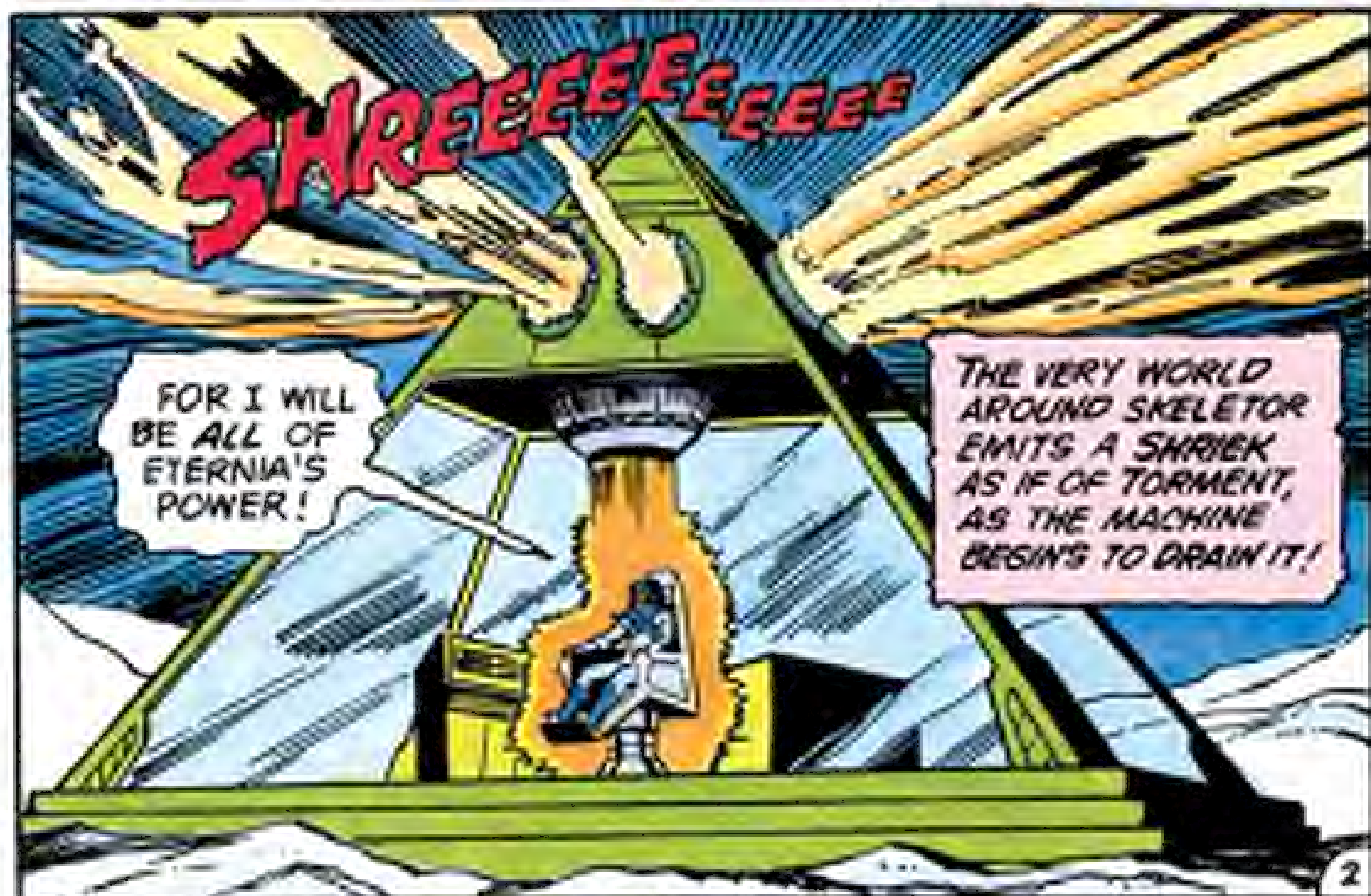
WRITTEN BY: GARY COHN
DRAWN BY: MARK TEIXEIRA
INKED BY: TOD SMITH
COLORED BY: ANTHONY TOLLIN



ATOP THE WORLD, AT ETERNIA'S NORTH POLE, SKELETOR IS FAR FROM THE REACH OF THE MIGHTY HE-MAN AND HIS ALLIES!



ONCE I THROW THIS SWITCH, THERE WILL BE NO POWER IN ETERNIA TO STOP ME...



FOR I WILL BE ALL OF ETERNIA'S POWER!

THE VERY WORLD AROUND SKELETOR EMITS A SHRIEK AS IF OF TORMENT, AS THE MACHINE BEGINS TO DRAIN IT!



AND ELSEWHERE, THE GODDESS
COMMUNES WITH THE INNOCENT
CREATURES OF ETERNIA'S WOODS...

YES, MY
FRIENDS...
THIS IS A
LOVELY
MOMENT
OF PEACE
AND
TRANQUILITY
THAT WE...

SUDDENLY...

UHHH...!
SOMETHING
... ATTACKS
THE VERY
CORE OF
MY BEING...

MUST GET TO...
HE-MAN... SEEK
HIS AID...

LEST I... PERISH!

4



AND AT CASTLE GRAYSKULL,
THE IMPREGNABLE, MYSTICAL
FORTRESS WHERE ARE
HIDDEN ALL OF ETERNIA'S
GREATEST SECRETS...



THE MAGIC-SIPHON
SHAKES IT TO ITS
VERY FOUNDATIONS!



WHOOOSSHHH

5





THE GREAT
FIGHTING
VEHICLE CARRIES
HE-MAN EVER
NORTHWARD. ITS
TREADS NEGOTI-
ATING EVEN THE
MOST PRECARIOUS
OBSTRUCTIONS!

THE TERRAIN WORSENS
AS I PROCEED! WHAT
CAN BE THE CAUSE
OF THIS CALAMITY?

THEN, DIRECTLY
AHEAD OF THE
INDOMITABLE
HERO...

BY THE
GODDESS!
THE VERY
EARTH
RUPTURES!

IT IS PROCRUSTUS,
THE GOD WHO HOLDS
THE INNER WORLD
TOGETHER WITH HIS
MANY ARMS!

HO, MIGHTY
ONE!... DO
NOT
ABANDON
YOUR DUTIES,
LEST CATASTRO-
PHE ENSUE!



EH...? OH..IT'S HE-MAN!
WHY DO
YOU
RESTRAIN
ME?

SOMETHING
TO THE NORTH
DRAWS ALL THE
MAGIC FROM
ETERNIA! BUT
I CANNOT ALLOW
YOU TO GIVE
YOURSELF UP
TO IT!



YOU MUST STAY
HERE AND HOLD
THE WORLD
TOGETHER! I
WILL END THIS
DIRE THREAT!

UHHHH!

THOOM!



HOLD FAST,
GIANT, AND
HAVE FAITH!
I WILL
PREVAIL!

I WILL TRY,
HE-MAN, FOR
ETERNIA'S
SAKE! BUT
THE LURE OF
THE MAGIC-
SIPHON IS
STRONG!
--HURRY!



AT LAST, FAR AHEAD, HE-MAN SEES...

THAT MUST BE THE
SOURCE OF THE MAGIC-
DRAIN! SO STRONG IS ITS
PULL HERE THAT EVEN
GREAT ZOAR CAN NO
LONGER REMAIN ALOFT!

COURAGE, MY FRIEND...
WE WILL SOON PUT
AN END TO THIS!





AND, FROM WITHIN
THE HEART OF THE
MAELSTROM OF
MYSTIC MIGHT, THE
MASTER OF EVIL
SEES...



HE-MAN!...

-- IT CANNOT BE! I CONTROL
THE MIGHTIEST FORCES OF
ALL ETERNIA NOW, YET
STILL HE COMES!



SKELETOR... I KNEW THIS MUST BE
YOUR DOING! BUT I AM COMING FOR
YOU, EVIL ONE, AND NOTHING CAN STOP ME...



... NOTHING!!

FOR I HAVE
SOMETHING THAT
YOU IN ALL OF
YOUR EVILNESS...



THROUGHOUT ETERNIA...



IN THE FORESTED PARADISE
WHERE RESIDES THE GODDESS...

AND EVEN AT THE USUALLY TEMPEST-
TOSSED CASTLE GRAYSKULL...



AND MOST ESPECIALLY IN THE ROYAL
PALACE OF ETERNIA, WHERE JOYOUS
THROUGHS CHEER THEIR GREATEST HERO...


ALL IS
WELL
ONCE
MORE...



...FOR HE-MAN HAS SAVED THE DAY!



- The figure in this comic set (the yellow part) is the Sorcerer's Apprentice.
- The Sorcerer's Apprentice is not present in the story.



PERHAPS I
STILL CANNOT
BREACH THE DEFENSES
OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL...
BUT AS LONG AS I
HAVE THE MYSTIC
CRYSTAL OF
THE CAVERNS, THE
ONLY THING THAT
WILL ALLOW ME
TO FOCUS ALL MY
PSYCHIC
ENERGIES ON
THE TALON
FIGHTER...

ONCE SKELETOR USED
THE MYSTIC MIGHT OF
POINT DREAD TO
ENDANGER ALL
ETERNIA. BUT THE
GODDESS SPIRITED
THE ENTIRE STRUCTURE
OFF TO CASTLE
GRAYSKULL, MERGING
IT WITH THE MYSTIC
STRONGHOLD.

BUT NOW THE
MASTER OF EVIL
HAS FOUND
MEANS TO SECURE
POINT DREAD
FOR HIS OWN
TWISTED
PURPOSES
ONCE MORE...
AND SOON
ETERNIA WILL
TREMBLE AGAIN
BEFORE...

THE POWER OF... POINT DREAD!

GARY COHN
WRITER

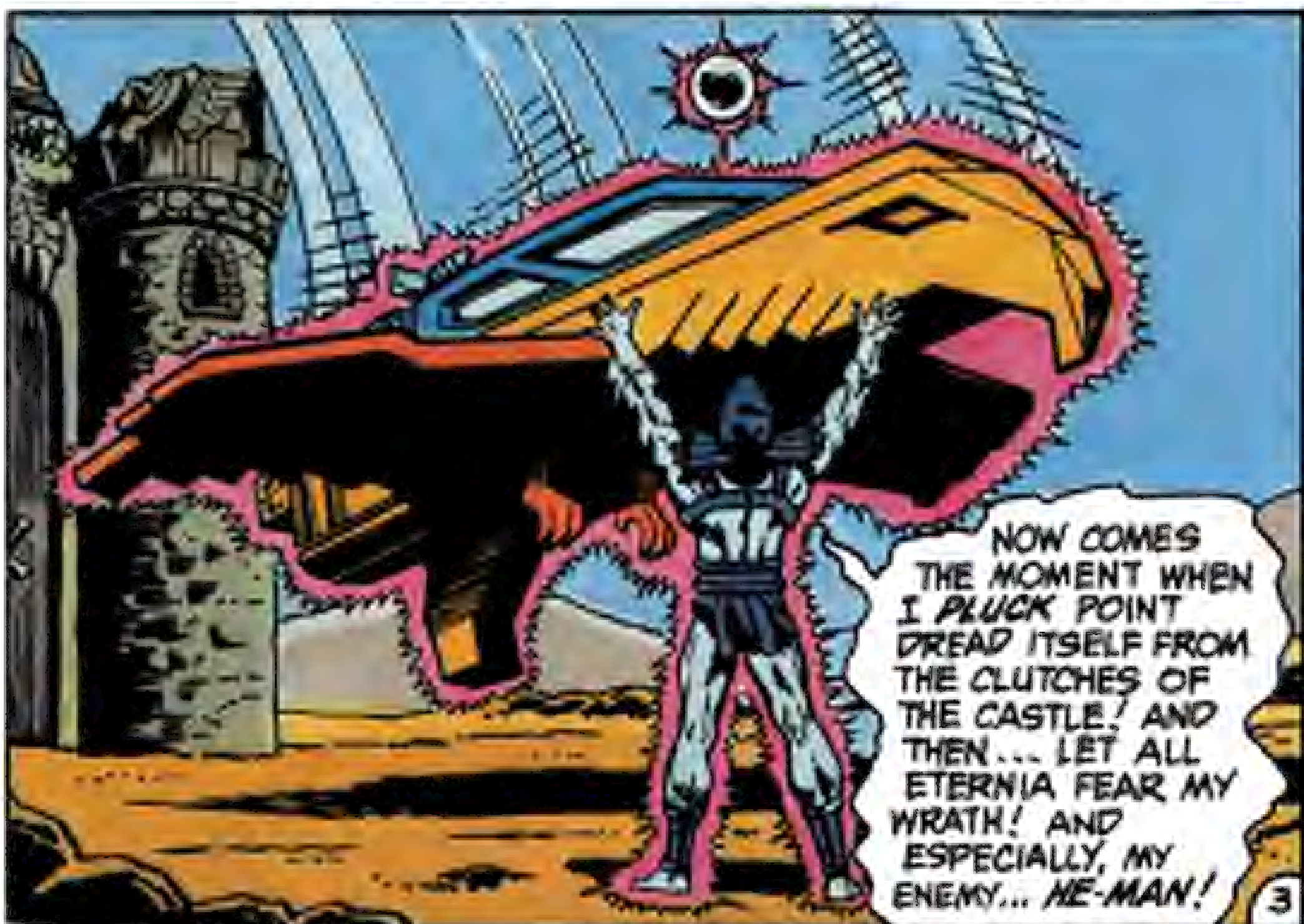
MARK TEIXEIRA
PENCILLER

TOD SMITH
INKER

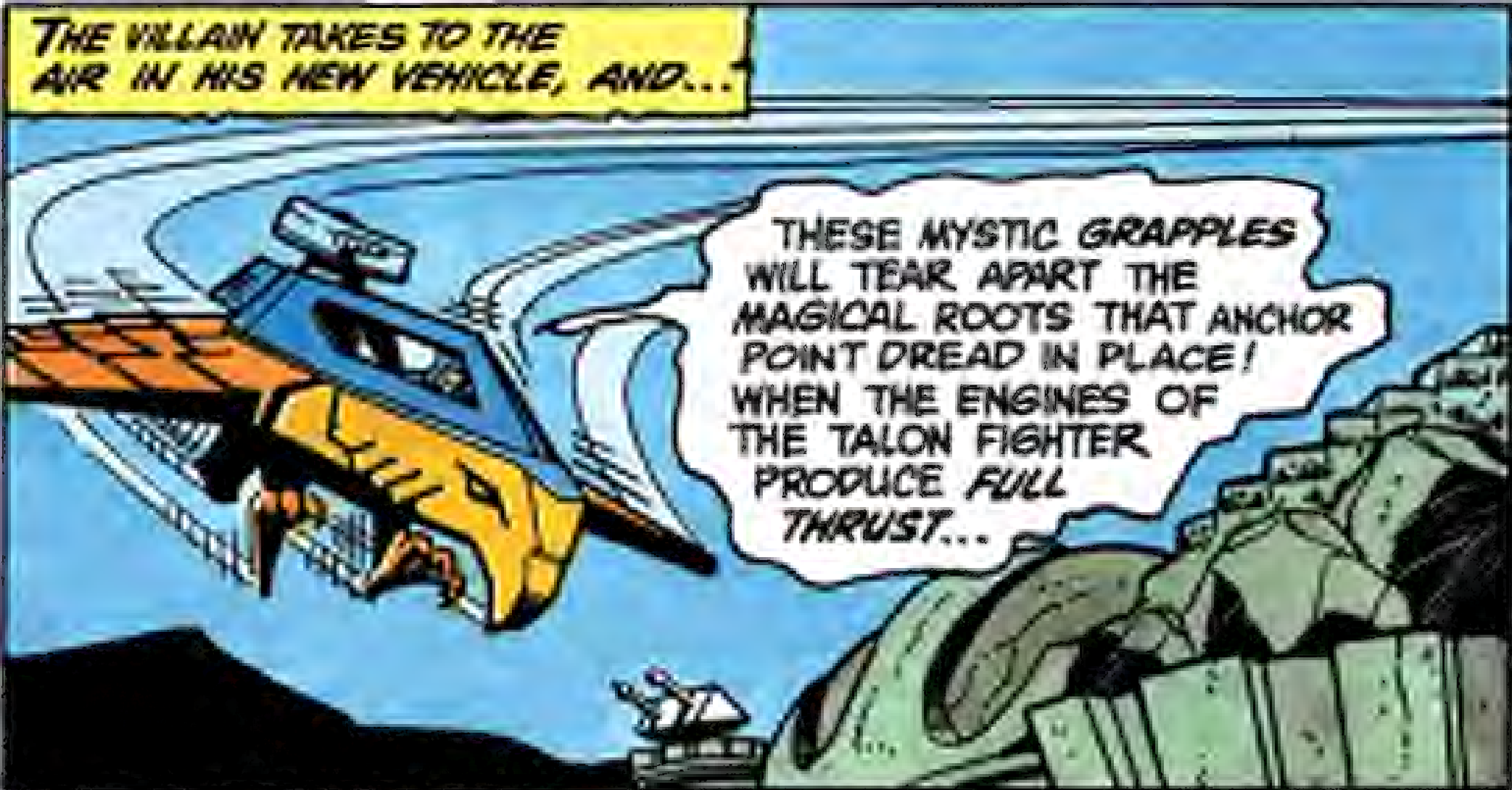
ANTHONY TOLLIN
COLORIST

DAVE MANAK
EDITOR






THE VILLAIN TAKES TO THE AIR IN HIS NEW VEHICLE, AND...



THESE MYSTIC GRAPPLES WILL TEAR APART THE MAGICAL ROOTS THAT ANCHOR POINT DREAD IN PLACE! WHEN THE ENGINES OF THE TALON FIGHTER PRODUCE FULL THRUST...



THERE IS NO POWER THAT CAN LONG WITHSTAND IT! HA! POINT DREAD IS MINE ONCE MORE!



... BUT HOLD...! THE CRYSTAL...!

I HAVE LOST IT!
IT IS DESTROYED!

BUT NO MATTER! POINT DREAD IS MINE, AND SHALL NEVER AGAIN BE PART OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL. THUS I NO LONGER HAVE NEED OF...

THE CRYSTAL OF THE CAVERNS!



AND NOW, THERE
IS *MUCH* PLANNING
TO DO...

... AND A *WORLD*
TO CONQUER!

**SOON THE FOREMOST VILLAIN OF ETERNIA
PLOTS WITH HIS UNDERLINGS THE WORK-
INGS OF HIS NEXT FOUL DEED!**

I HAVE HAD ENOUGH OF DEFEAT, MY
LACKEYS! IT IS TIME FOR A MORE
DIRECT APPROACH!



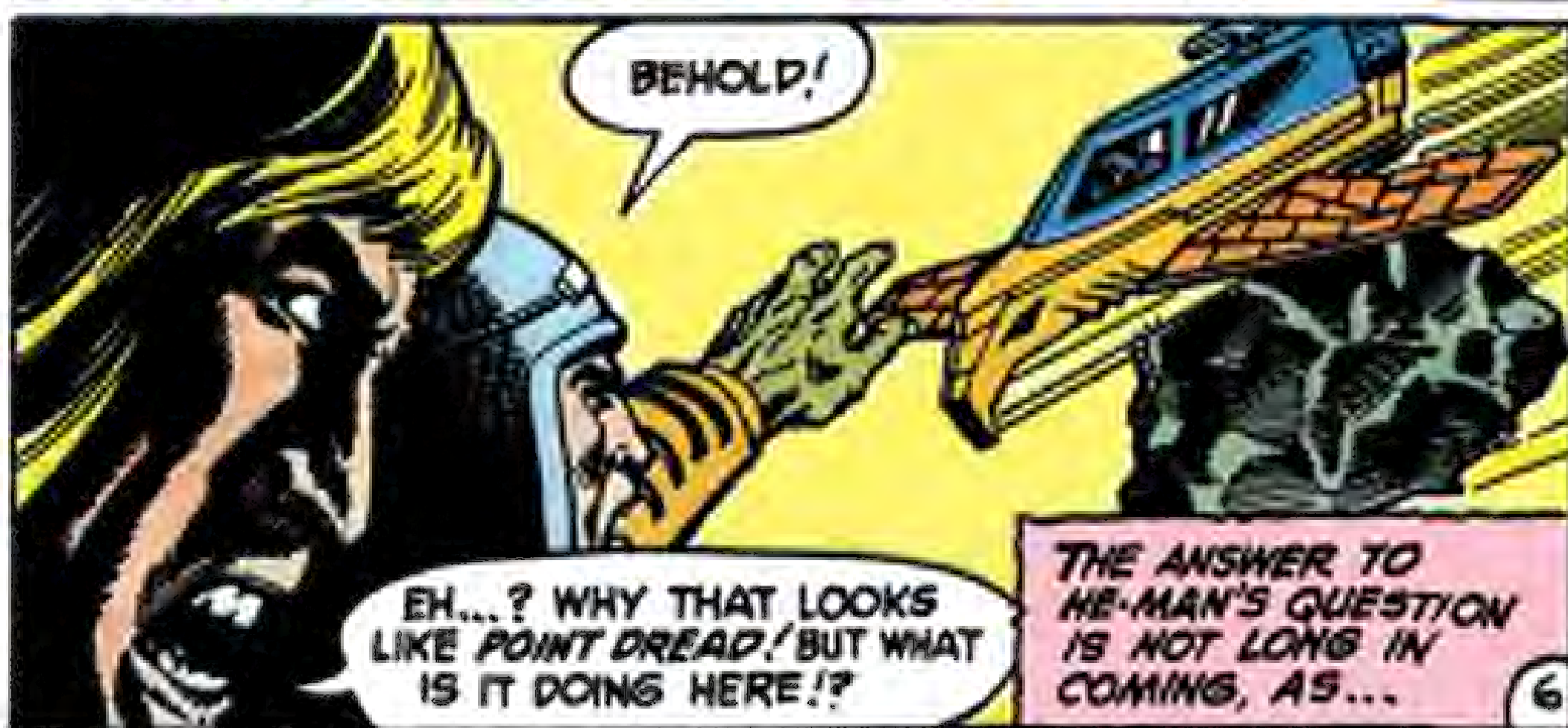
BUT HOW
WILL IT BE DONE,
MASTER?

THAT YOU WILL LEARN
WHEN THE TIME COMES.
BUT BE ASSURED--
ETERNIA WILL FALL...



... *TO*
SKELETOR!

5





BUT BEFORE THE
HEROES CAN MOVE
TO DEAL WITH THE
ASSAULT, ANOTHER
BLAST ROCKS
THE PALACE!



HA! NOW I REALLY HAVE
THEM! THEY WILL NEVER
BE ABLE TO RESIST THE
COMBINED POWER OF
POINT DREAD AND
THE TALON FIGHTER!



I WILL TAKE COMMAND
OF THE PALACE'S
DEFENSES, HE-MAN!
YOU MUST DEAL
WITH THE THREAT
OF SKELETOR AND
THE TALON FIGHTER!

AYE, MAN-AT-
ARMS! BUT I
WILL NOT
FACE THE
VILLAIN
ALONE!



HA!-- THIS MACHINE IS TRULY A
SCIENTIFIC MARVEL!-- WITH IT UNDER
MY CONTROL, NONE CAN STOP ME--
THIS TIME SKELETOR SHALL
BE TRIUMPHANT!



IT IS THE CURSED
HE-MAN, AND HIS
COMPANION,
ZOAR, THE
FIGHTING
FALCON! BUT
EVEN THEIR
COMBINED
MIGHT WILL
PROVE NO
MATCH FOR
THE TALON
FIGHTER!



THIS TIME YOU
ARE TOO BRAZEN,
SKULL-FACE! THIS
TIME I
WILL TRULY
MAKE YOU PAY!



AND, IN THE SKIES OVERHEAD...

THIS IS A *PERILOUS* SITUATION
INDEED! FOR EVEN THOUGH WE
ARE *TWO* AGAINST *ONE*, THE TALON
FIGHTER IS THE *MIGHTIEST* FLYING
MACHINE IN ALL ETERNIA!

NO! SKELETOR HAS
GREAT ZOAR IN HIS SIGHTS!

EVASDE HIM, ZOAR!
BEWARE HIS...

SHWAAAAA!

...LASERS...!
TOO
LATE--
HE'S
HIT!

HA! THAT'S *ONE*
DOWN! AND NOW
FOR YOU, HATED
HE-MAN...!

HE'S ON MY TAIL!
CAN'T SHAKE HIM!
BUT I MUST DO
SOMETHING--
ETERNIA DEPENDS
ON ME!

ONLY ONE CHANCE
... THE WIND
RAIDER IS MORE
MANEUVERABLE
THAN THE TALON
FIGHTER...
MUST TRY TO
USE THAT
ADVANTAGE...!

YES-- FLEE,
HE-MAN! BUT
YOU CANNOT
ESCAPE ME!
THIS TIME
SKELETOR
WILL WIN!
THIS TIME,
YOU WILL
DIE!

TRY WHAT YOU WILL, HE-MAN
-- THE LONGER YOU LAST,
THE SWEETER SHALL BE
MY VICTORY!

MUST MAKE
HIM FOLLOW ME
WHILE I...

...DIVE!

AND SO THE TWO
SHIPS PLUMMET
EARTHWARD! BUT
THERE IS ONE WHO
REALIZES HE-MAN'S
PLAN...





SOON, HE-MAN
LANDS TO FIND
THE PALACE
SECURED...



WELL FOUGHT,
MAN-AT-ARMS!
YOU HAVE
OVERCOME THE
INVADERS!



NAY... THE CREDIT GOES TO YOU, HE-MAN -- THE
FIGHT WENT OUT OF THEM ONCE
THEY SAW THEIR MASTER FALL!



HO, GREAT
ZOAR -- MY
HEART SINGS
TO SEE
YOU ALIVE!

AYE -- I BUT HAD MY
TAIL FEATHERS *SINGED*!
WE HAVE WON A GREAT
VICTORY TODAY... BUT
I *WONDER*...

WHAT HAS BECOME
OF SKELETOR, BEAST-
MAN, THE TALON
FIGHTER... AND
POINT DREAD!?

FAR, FAR AWAY, TWO BRUISED AND BATTERED VILLAINS SLOWLY BEGIN TO RECOVER FROM THEIR WOUNDS...



2 STORIES
WITH RECORD

MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE

- The Power of
Point Dread!
- Danger at
Castle
Grayskull!



Masters of the Universe

PRESENT

**THE POWER OF
POINT DREAD!**

**DANGER AT
CASTLE GRAYSKULL!**



Hello friends. I am He-Man, and I want you to read along
as we listen to the adventures of the Masters of the Universe.
Get ready for a lot of fun and excitement.

NOW LET'S START:

HIDDEN DEEP WITHIN HIS MOUNTAIN LAIR, SKELETON GRINE HIS DEADLY SMILE. HIS NEXT PLOT CANNOT FAIL. HE HAS PLANNED FOR EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING, THAT IS, EXCEPT...

THE POWER OF POINT DREAD!

BEHOLD, BEAST MAN, SOON I WILL BE ABLE TO ENTER CASTLE GRAYSKULL FREELY AND LEARN ITS MANY SECRETS!

BUT, MASTER - WHAT ABOUT HE-MAN? HE IS ALWAYS THERE TO GUARD THE CASTLE.















- This is the only comic where He-Man, Man-At-Arms, and Zodac don't avoid each other, they actually fight. Other versions avoid the story by making He-Man and Man-At-Arms enemies.
- Zodac is portrayed as a Cosmic Enforcer who wants to balance the universe.

THERE IS A BALANCE TO THE UNIVERSE WHICH MUST BE KEPT. BUT SKELETOR HAS UPSET THAT BALANCE BY PLAYING A TERRIBLE TRICK ON YOU WITH HIS ENERGY-BLADE.

YES, I KNOW THAT NOW. BUT HOW CAN I GUARD CASTLE GRAYSKULL WHEN ETERNIA NEEDS ME AS WELL? HOW CAN I BE TWO PLACES AT ONCE?

THERE IS A BALANCE TO THE UNIVERSE WHICH MUST BE KEPT. BUT SKELETOR HAS UPSET THAT BALANCE BY PLAYING A TERRIBLE TRICK ON YOU WITH HIS ENERGY-BLADE.

YES, I KNOW THAT NOW. BUT HOW CAN I GUARD CASTLE GRAYSKULL WHEN ETERNIA NEEDS ME AS WELL? HOW CAN I BE TWO PLACES AT ONCE?

HERE IS YOUR ANSWER, HE-MAN. BEHOLD-- POINT DREAD, IT WAS CREATED BY THE SAME SCIENTISTS WHO BUILT CASTLE GRAYSKULL AGES AGO BEFORE THE GREAT WAR. POINT DREAD MOVES THROUGH BOTH TIME AND SPACE, SO YOU CAN GO ANYWHERE IN ETERNIA IN AN INSTANT! JUST FLY THE TALON FIGHTER ABOVE IT TO ANY PLACE YOU WANT TO GO.

THE SCALES OF DESTINY ARE ONCE AGAIN BALANCED. FAREWELL, HE-MAN.

HE'S GONE. WELL, LET'S SEE WHAT POINT DREAD LOOKS LIKE INSIDE.

THE SCALES OF DESTINY ARE ONCE AGAIN BALANCED. FAREWELL, HE-MAN.

HE'S GONE. WELL, LET'S SEE WHAT POINT DREAD LOOKS LIKE INSIDE.









DO YOUR EYES DECEIVE YOU? ARE HE-MAN AND MAN-AT-ARMS REALLY LOCKED IN MORTAL COMBAT? IF SO, THEN IT IS A BAD OMEN OF THINGS TO COME. IT COULD MEAN...

DANGER AT CASTLE GRAYSKULL!

I HAVE
YOU NOW,
HE-MAN!

NEVER,
MAN-AT-ARMS!
DEFEAT SHALL
BE YOURS!





OVERHEAD, ZOAR, THE SORCERESS' FALCON ARRIVES WITH A MESSAGE.

BY YOUR LEAVE, HE-MAN. THERE IS TROUBLE. SKELETOR AND HIS MEN HAVE BEEN SPOTTED APPROACHING CASTLE GRAYSKULL FROM THE NORTH. THEY ARE ONLY A SHORT MARCH AWAY FROM IT.

WE'LL TAKE THE TALON FIGHTER. WE MUST GET THERE QUICKLY!

BUT HE-MAN, THE TALON FIGHTER CAN ONLY CARRY TWO OF US.

NO, YOU GO AHEAD, FATHER. I'LL TAKE THE ATTACK-TRAK AND MEET YOU AT CASTLE GRAYSKULL LATER. NOW GO!







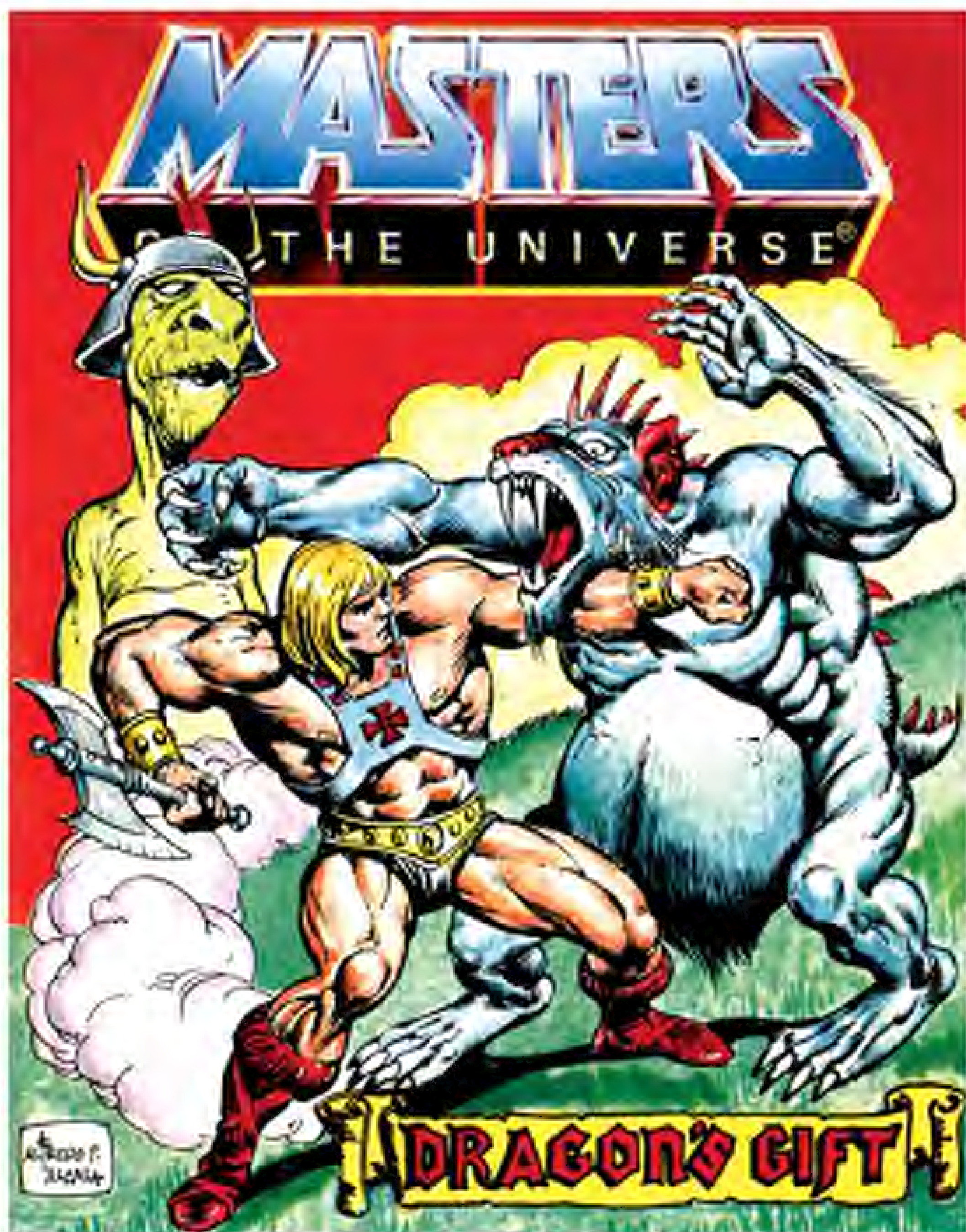












DRAGON'S GIFT

WRITER
MICHAEL HALPERIN
ART & COLOR
ALFREDO P. ALCALA

FAR OFF IN ANOTHER UNIVERSE IS A PLACE OF MAGIC, MYTH, SORCERY AND SCIENCE-- THE LEGENDARY PLANET OF ETERNIA. IN THE ROYAL PALACE, A STRANGER PRESENTS A GIFT TO THE KING AND QUEEN-- BUT --

THE AMULET
HAS SKELETOR'S
SIGN ON IT --
DON'T TOUCH
IT!!















NO ONE CAN
HAVE MY FAVORS
WITHOUT PAYING
A PRICE --

BRING ME SKYTREE. CHOP
HIM DOWN AND CARRY HIM
BACK TO MY LAIR. ONLY
THEN WILL I GIVE YOU
THE ANSWER TO THE
SECRET THAT YOU
SEEK.





**THE BATTLE OVER, HE-MAN
AND TEELA APPROACH SKYTREE.**

HOLD, MORTALS.
BE YOU FRIEND
OR FOE?



WE COME TO SEEK
YOUR AID. MY FATHER,
MAN-AT-ARMS, MAY DIE
IF WE DON'T GET A SPELL
FROM GRANAMYR.



AND HE WON'T
GRANT US ONE UNLESS
YOU ARE BROUGHT
TO HIM.



MANY CENTURIES
AGO, MAN-AT-ARMS'
ANCESTORS SPARED
MY LIFE. NOW, MOST
WILLINGLY I WOULD
GIVE IT UP TO SAVE
HIM.



NO! I CANNOT SACRIFICE
YOU TO GRANAMYR'S WHIM!

HE-MAN
AND TEELA
RETURN TO
GRANAMYR'S
LAIR...
EMPTY-
HANDED.

YOU HAVE DONE
AS I COMMANDED?

NO! I WILL
NOT TAKE A
LIFE FOR I
HAVE SWORN
TO UPHOLD
JUSTICE.



THEN
SEE HOW
YOU FARE
AGAINST
THIS!

HEH! HA!
HA! HA!

MONSTERS OF
THE MOUNTAINS!







WITH THE SECRET SPELL, MAN-AT-ARMS IS BROUGHT BACK TO THE WORLD OF FLESH AND BLOOD JUST IN TIME.

ANOTHER FIVE MINUTES AND THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN THE END.

WE HAVE A WISE OLD DRAGON TO THANK, BUT WHY DID HE TEST US, HE-MAN?



SOMETIMES IT'S EASY TO FORGET WHAT'S RIGHT AND WRONG IN THE FACE OF EVIL. PERHAPS GRANAMYR WANTED ONLY TO SHOW US THAT THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM.

THE
END

You created a good deal of the foundation for the Masters of the Universe story line as fans know it today. Could you talk about your role in the development of the brand's mythology? How did you first get hired by Mattel to create a backstory for the MOTU characters?

My involvement with MOTU began with a phone call in 1980 from a friend who worked at Mattel. The company had released a new line of action figures and was inundated with calls and letters (people still used land lines and the US Post Office from kids who couldn't figure out the difference between the heroes and the villains. The first series of comic books compounded the problem by not keeping the premise consistent. Add to that misfire an upcoming animated television series produced by Filmation for Mattel.

What was your involvement with the 1980s Filmation *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* animated series?

Mattel searched for a writer who could create a cohesive backstory (a bible), as well as story lines for the series that also could be used for marketing, thus producing three solutions at one time: consistency, the basis for a series, and a sales tool. The head of Mattel's male action figures read my screenplay adaptation of the classic Anglo-Saxon epic poem *Beowulf* and signed me to develop the bible and act as consultant on the series, as well as become a liaison between Mattel and Filmation. I had the task of protecting the franchise and maintaining its sci-fi/fantasy logic.

Mattel felt strongly that Masters needed a unified theme. Coming from a strong background in character development, I forged ahead, working with decision makers at the company. They agreed with my notion that all the main characters (the action figures) needed exciting, imaginative biographies that fit into the environment that was both high tech and primitive. The challenge of creating a hybrid society was solved by providing Eternia with a backstory as well.

Your story line was something of a departure from Don Glut's four early storybook minicomics. In Glut's version, He-Man is a warrior who leaves his tribe and is given magical weapons by a sorceress-goddess. Eternia exists in a postapocalyptic state, where remnants of technology from an earlier

time still remain. Later on, however, an Eternian monarchy and the transformation of Prince Adam into He-Man were introduced. Why was the decision made to revise He-Man's origin? Were you given any direction in this regard?

I imagined an advanced, benevolent, peaceful society governed by a council of wise Elders who governed from the grand Hall of Wisdom in the western hemisphere of Eternia. To the east lay a war-torn land that slowly encroached on the Elders. They built the Mystic Wall to contain opposing armies fighting monumental battles, leaving behind a scarred and desolate land destroyed by a cataclysmic war that transformed its population into mutants. The war also created cracks in the Mystic Wall that the Lords of Destruction (this name was never used in the TV series or comics) breached. Driven back by ancestors of the Masters of the Universe, they retreated, and the Elders rebuilt the Mystic Wall to seal off the east. In *He-Man* is understood the physical layout. I drew a sketch of Planet Eternia that I still have, noting all the major landmarks. Filmation's wonderful artists refined it.)

One of the Elders, the wise Sorceress, convinced the council that the people of Eternia had the right to self-determination. The citizens formed a constitutional monarchy and chose a king from the family that led the battle against the Lords of Destruction. If a time of crisis arose, a champion would appear and fight with them against evil forces. The Elders transformed the Hall of Wisdom into the furlinking, enigmatic, myth-laden, mysterious Castle Grayskull, hidden within the depths of the forest, and coalesced their collective wisdom of the universe into a great crystal harbored in the depths of Grayskull and guarded by the Sorceress.

He-Man/Prince Adam's mother was from Earth, and his father Eternian royalty. The origin story of astronaut Marlena Glenn (an homage to John Glenn), who unwittingly crashed on Eternia and was rescued by King Randor, appeared once in the Filmation version but played a central part in the rebooted 2002 version. Three members of Marlena's spaceship crew mutated into Evil-Lyn, Tri-Klops, and Boomer Man. Their motivation was to overthrow Skeletor in order to gain power and use it for their mutant-induced psychotic need to take revenge on their former captivator, Marlena. Unfortunately, those elements never found their way into the 1982 or 2002 versions.



The day of Adam's birth, Durlan, a descendant of a long line of armament specialists with the hereditary title Man-At-Arms, was summoned to the Evergreen Forest, where he discovered a baby girl, Teela, daughter of the Sorceress, who charged him with the responsibility for her upbringing. He took an oath to keep her origin secret from everyone, including Teela herself. On Adam's eighteenth birthday, Man-At-Arms was mysteriously ordered to bring the reluctant prince to Castle Graydull, where the Sorceress revealed his destiny. After a moment of hesitation, Adam raised the Sword of Power with the cry of "By the Power of Graydull . . . I have the Power" that still resonates, and the teenager transformed into He-Man.

Filmation chose to use the same figure for both He-Man and Adam, one with a tan and wearing fighting armor and the other without a tan in civilian clothes. The 2002 version created a believable teenage Adam that made the transformation more dramatic and powerful.

Paul Kupperberg at DC Comics wrote a three-issue *Masters of the Universe* miniseries in 1982. The issues included characters like Prince Adam and

Cringer. Was Kupperberg working from an earlier version of your Filmation story bible, or were you working with any of Kupperberg's material?

Masters premiered in 1982, along with the three-issue DC comic book miniseries based on the finished bible, with changes to parts of the premise made by the production company. Within a few weeks after its debut, *Masters of the Universe* became the most successful syndicated animated series on television.

You wrote some of the minicomics that came with the figures. Notably, you wrote the adaptation of Larry DiTillio's cartoon script for "The Dragon's Gift." You also wrote minicomics such as *Siege of Arion*, *The Secret Liquid of Life!*, and *He-Man and the Insect People*. Could you talk about working on the minicomics? How did that come about?

Because of my in-depth knowledge of story, characters, and development, Mattel suggested I write some of the minicomics and introduce elements sidelined in the TV series. It proved to be a rewarding experience, since Mattel accepted the work with



like experience, and they brought in great artists who created imaginative, stylized illustrations that blended with the stories. The comics included an adaptation of Larry Dillio's "The Dragon's Gift." Larry came to my attention during the preproduction phase of the TV series when I read a story he wrote for a Dungeons and Dragons magazine. He brought a fresh dynamic to the series and became one of Masters' principal writers. My other titles* were *The Obelisk*, *Double-Edged Sword*, *Ring of Dreams*, *Temple of Nepthu*, *My-Mac and the Insect People*, *Star City* (adapted from "A Tale of Two Cities"), *Singe of Arion* (adapted from "Reign of the Monster"), *The Secret Liquid of Life* (adapted from "The Search"), and *Mask of Power*.

When MOTU began to soar in sales and viewership, Mattel decided to create a game. *Masters of the Universe: The Power of My-Mac*, for its Intellivision home video console. I wrote the scenario, and the game was released in 1983.

Michael, you reference *Temple of Nepthu* and *Ring of Dreams* as minicomics. *Temple of Nepthu* later became *Temple of Darkness*¹, and Nepthu was replaced by Skeleor in the final comic. However, *Ring of Dreams* does not exist as a minicomic. Can you talk about its plot?

Skeleor gives Faker a ring, stolen from the game, long for Queen Nadena that makes her most terri-

* Dillio's name appears under the first drafts of these minicomics. Dillio's suggestions were additional material to some scripts. As a result, the minicomics are not his work.



lying nightmares come to life. The manifestation is destroyed by He-Man and Teela. The Sorceress tells He-Man it's the result of the ring, and they realize it was Faker and not He-Man who presented the ring to the queen. In her next nightmare, Skeletor captures He-Man; this comes true, but Zor (the Sorceress) telepathically tells the sleeping queen to dream of He-Man's power. He-Man and the Masters overcome Skeletor, Muttlyn, M. Hugs, and the others, regain the ring, and return it to its owners for safekeeping.

In the original script for *The Secret Liquid of Life*, Zodac appears alongside the Sorceress and He-Man in the opening panel. However, he is missing from the actual minicomic. Do you know why Zodac was removed?

I haven't the slightest idea why Zodac was excised. When you're a writer for hire, the company that pays you can do whatever they want without your input.

What was your involvement with the 2002 Mike Young Productions *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* cartoon?

Fast-forward. Mattel approached me to reboot *Masters* for its twentieth anniversary in 2002. The new

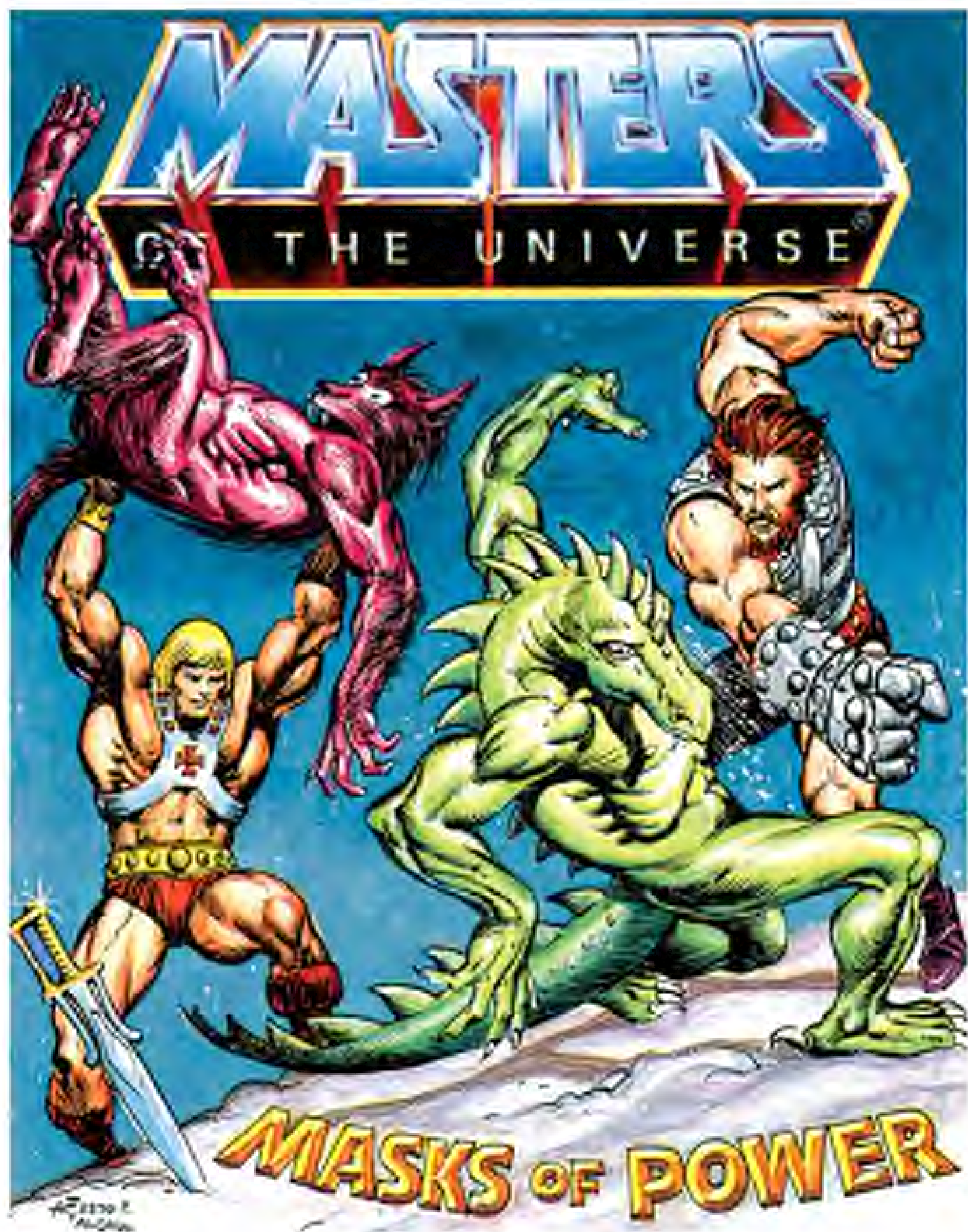
title combined much of the original material with a new story line for Mike Young Productions. The origins of He-Man were established in the two-part opening episodes. An abbreviated version became the introduction for succeeding episodes. As Mattel's urging, I wrote "Of Machines and Men," which included events related to the great wars and the division of Eternia between good and evil.

If the twentieth-anniversary series had been renewed, the next season would have started with a story that took a dramatic leap. Skeletor appears to recall his evil past and signs a treaty with a real-time hologram of Fandor. Skeletor's true motivation emerges, and He-Man and the Masters of the Universe are branded traitors. Betraying the Masters and forging alliances in Eternia, they make their headquarters in the Fortress of Liberty deep within a cavern in the Mystic Mountains given to He-Man by Gerdolphus, king of the gnomes. From there they battle Skeletor and the Lords of Destruction with the aid of their allies. The tale has multiple surprises—and the emerging story of Teela, who inherits the muscle of her mother, the Sorceress, with great trepidation.

What advice would you give to writers tackling the MOTU myths?

Writers interested in tackling the myth of MOTU should keep in mind that the object of storytelling is entertainment. To paraphrase film producer Samuel Goldwyn: "If you want to send a message use e-mail." However, when dealing with a rich subject such as *Masters*, writers ought to immerse themselves in mythology, western literature, and an understanding of human nature with all its angst, fears, prejudices, taboos, and existential threats. He-Man and the Masters defeat their enemies with knowledge and intelligence. Violence is a last resort, and no one gets killed, even when mortal danger looms. ☛





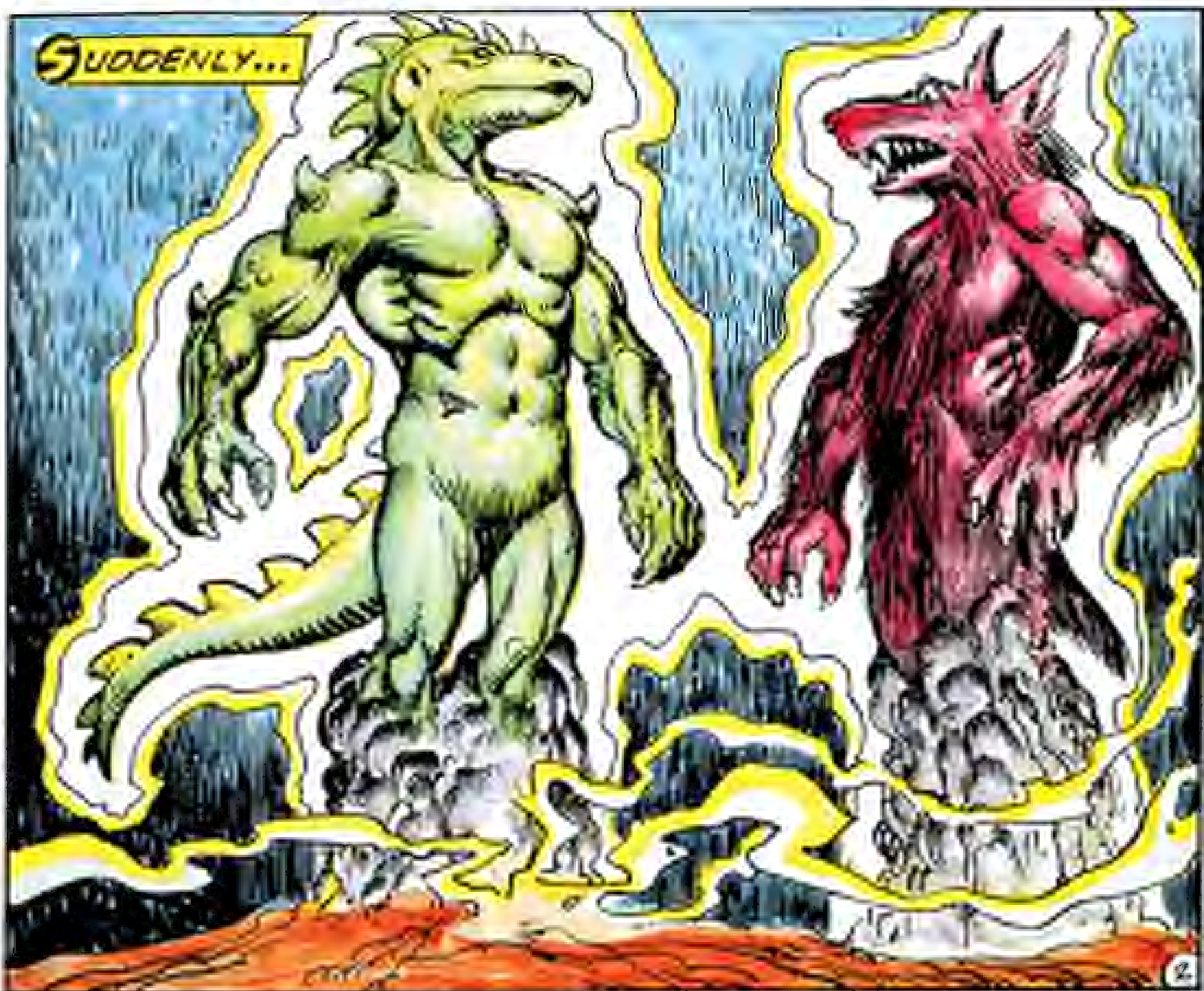
THE LEGENDARY PLANET OF ETERNIA HOLDS MANY SECRETS AND ONE OF PRINCE ADAM'S HOBBIES IS UNCOVERING THE MYSTERIES OF ANCIENT RUINS.

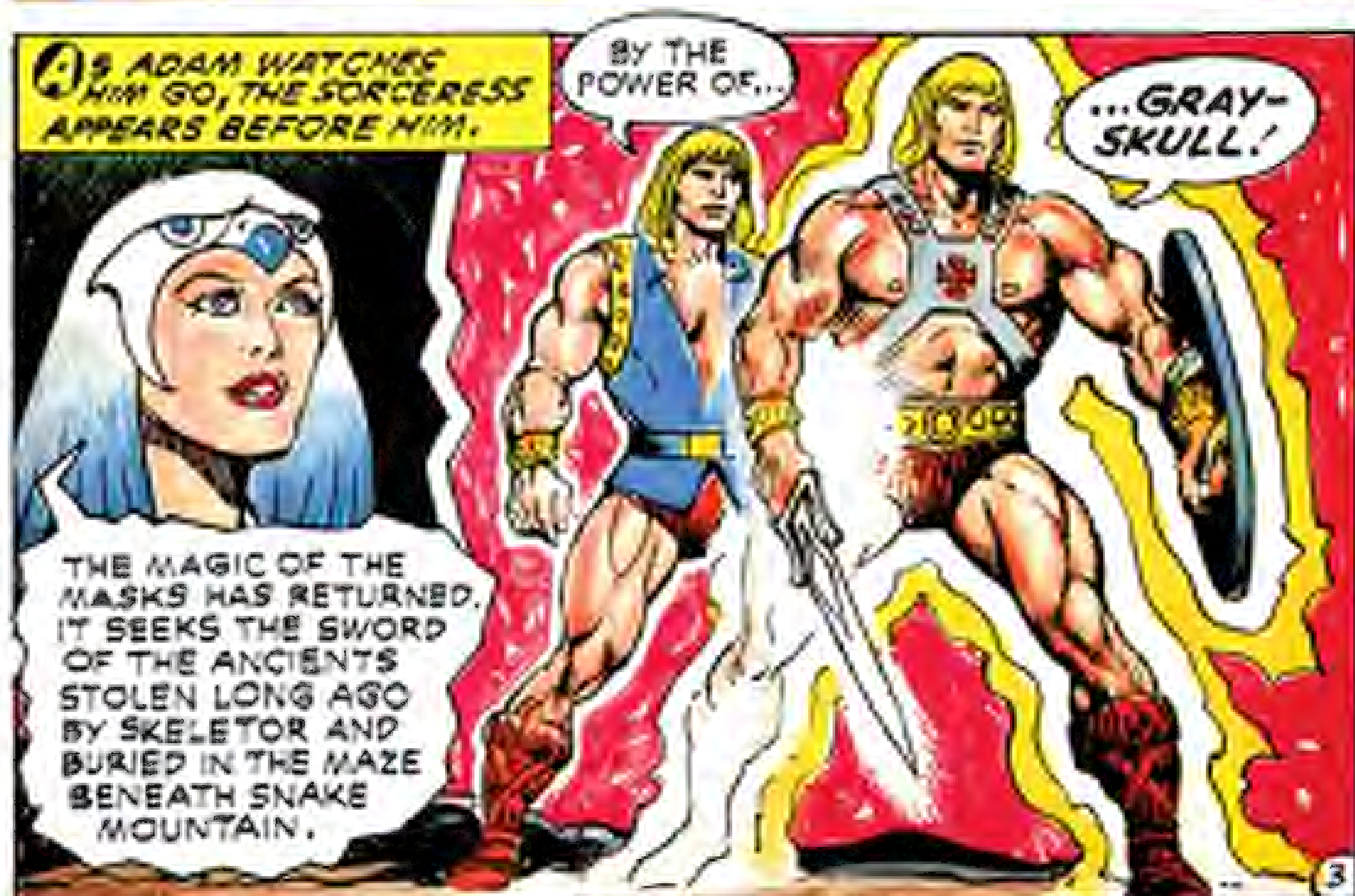
LOOK, FISTO, THE MYSTIC MASKS OF POWER. WHOEVER WEARS THEM GAINS TREMENDOUS STRENGTH TO USE FOR GOOD OR EVIL.

MASKS OF POWER

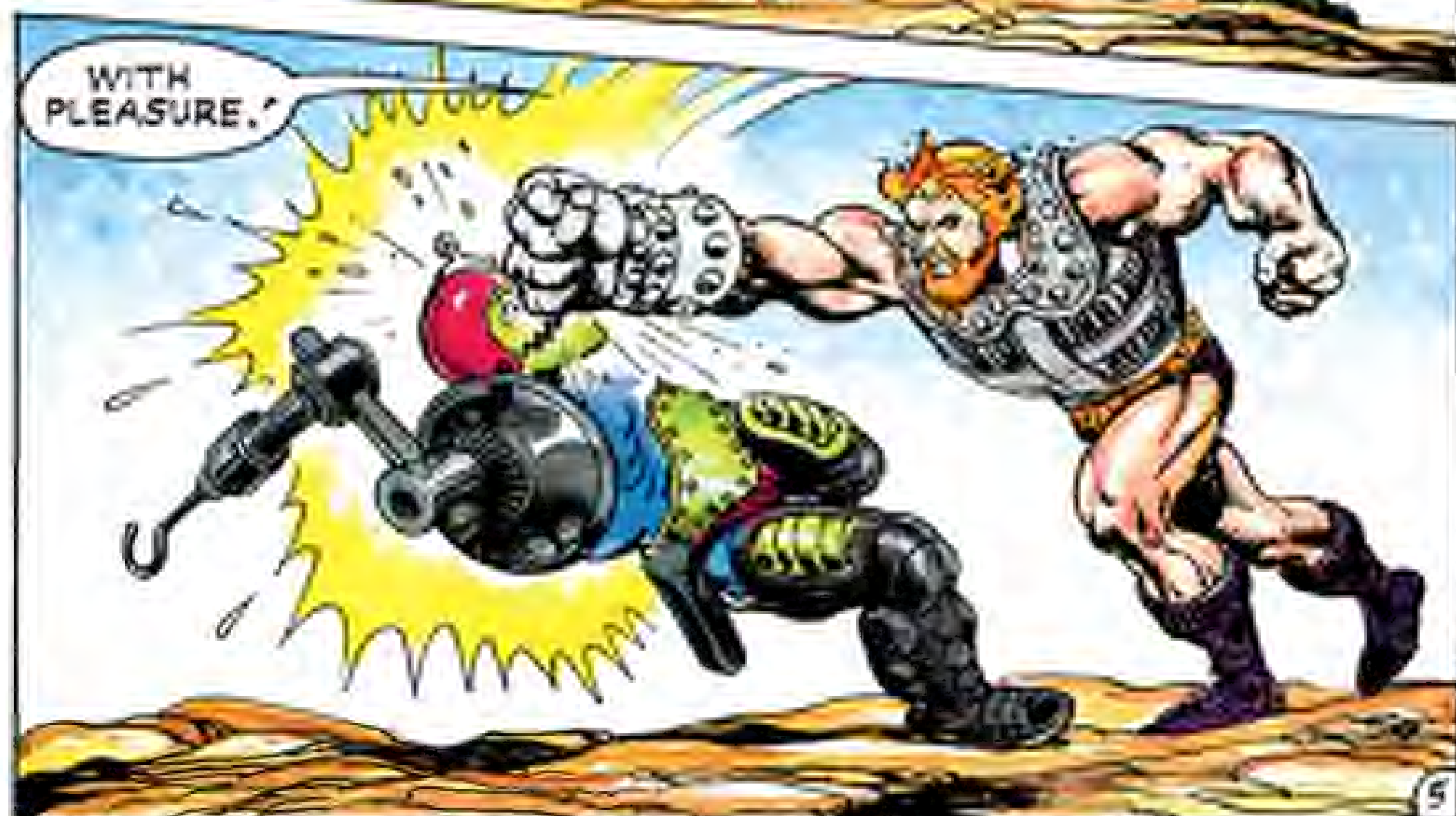
FROM AFAR, SKELETOR AND EVIL-LYN WATCH WITH GLEEFUL GREED.

EVIL-LYN, SEND THE ORCS TO FETCH THOSE MASKS -- FOR ME!









SKELETOR, SHOW
ME THE MAZE OR THE
PLANET IS DOOMED.

I HAVE NO CHOICE. THE DEMONS
IMPRISONED ME IN THIS CAGE OF
SORCERY. FOR NOW, WE MUST WORK
TOGETHER OR BE DESTROYED.

MER-MAN,
SHOW THEM
THE WAY.







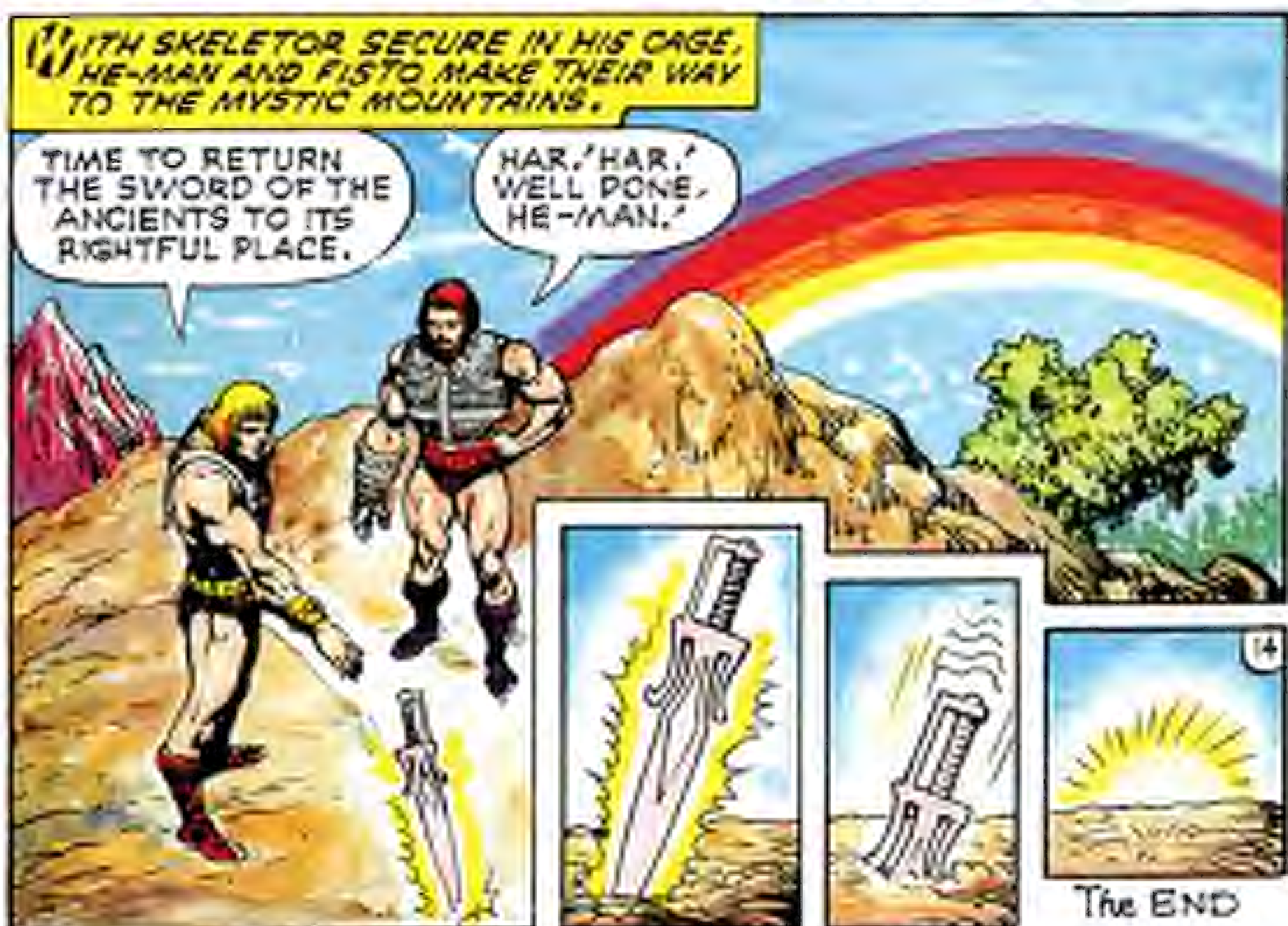
















HE-MAN AND THE INSECT PEOPLE

WRITER:
**MICHAEL
HALPERIN**
ARTIST:
**ALFREDO
ALCALA**

**KING RANDOR,
QUEEN MARLENA
AND THEIR
SON, PRINCE
ADAM, STUDY
THE HISTORY
OF THE PLANET
ETERNIA WHEN
SUDDENLY
THE WALLS
SHAKE AND
THE PALACE
SEEMS TO
COME APART.**

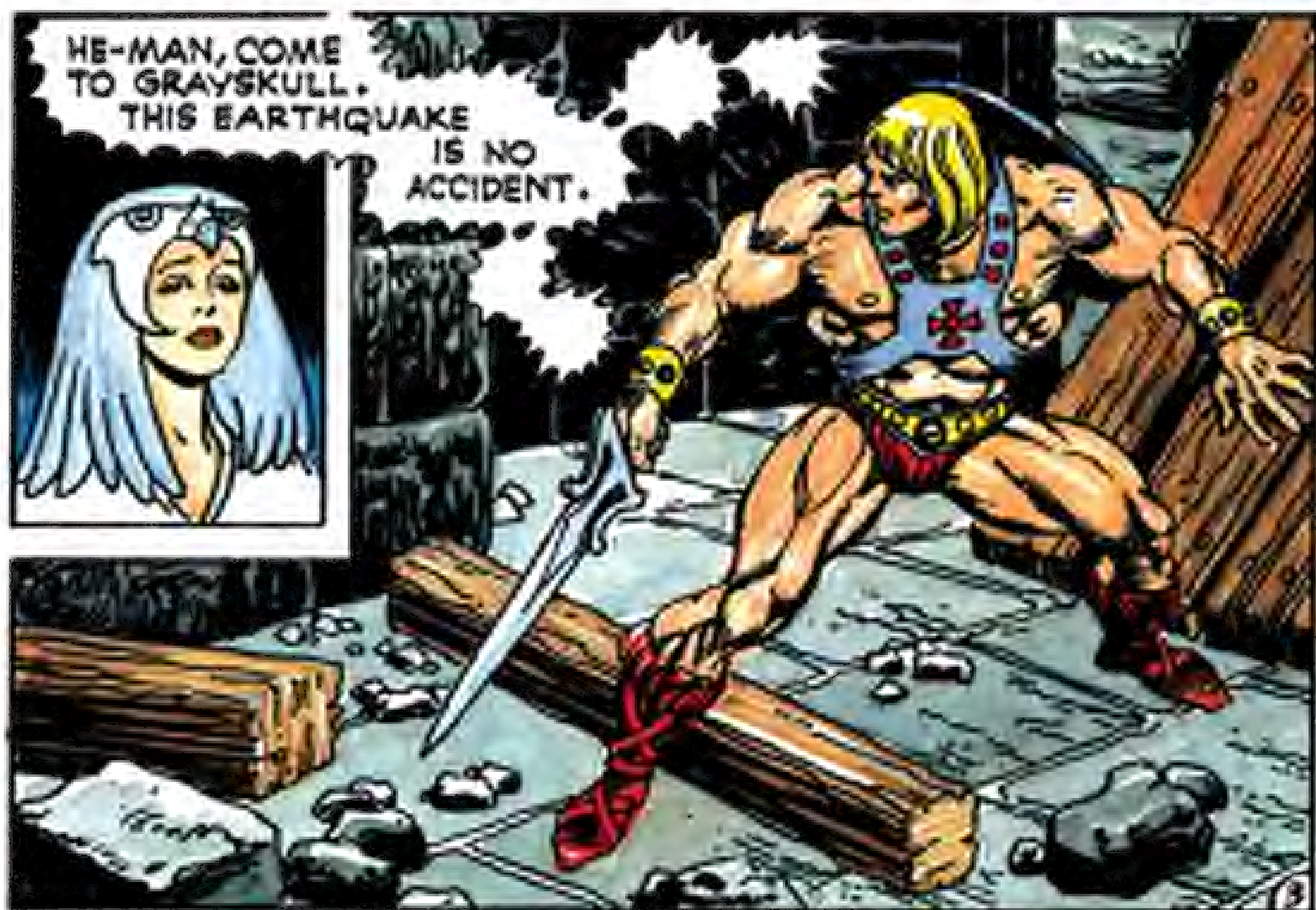
AN
EARTHQUAKE!
QUICK, ADAM,
GET YOUR
MOTHER TO
SAFETY!

BUT WHAT
ABOUT YOU,
RANDOR?

HURRY, MOTHER!
FOLLOW ME!









HE-MAN AND THE HEROIC WARRIORS MAKE THEIR WAY THROUGH THE DARKNESS OF THE UNDERGROUND PASSAGE-
WAY UNSURE OF WHAT THEY'LL FIND.

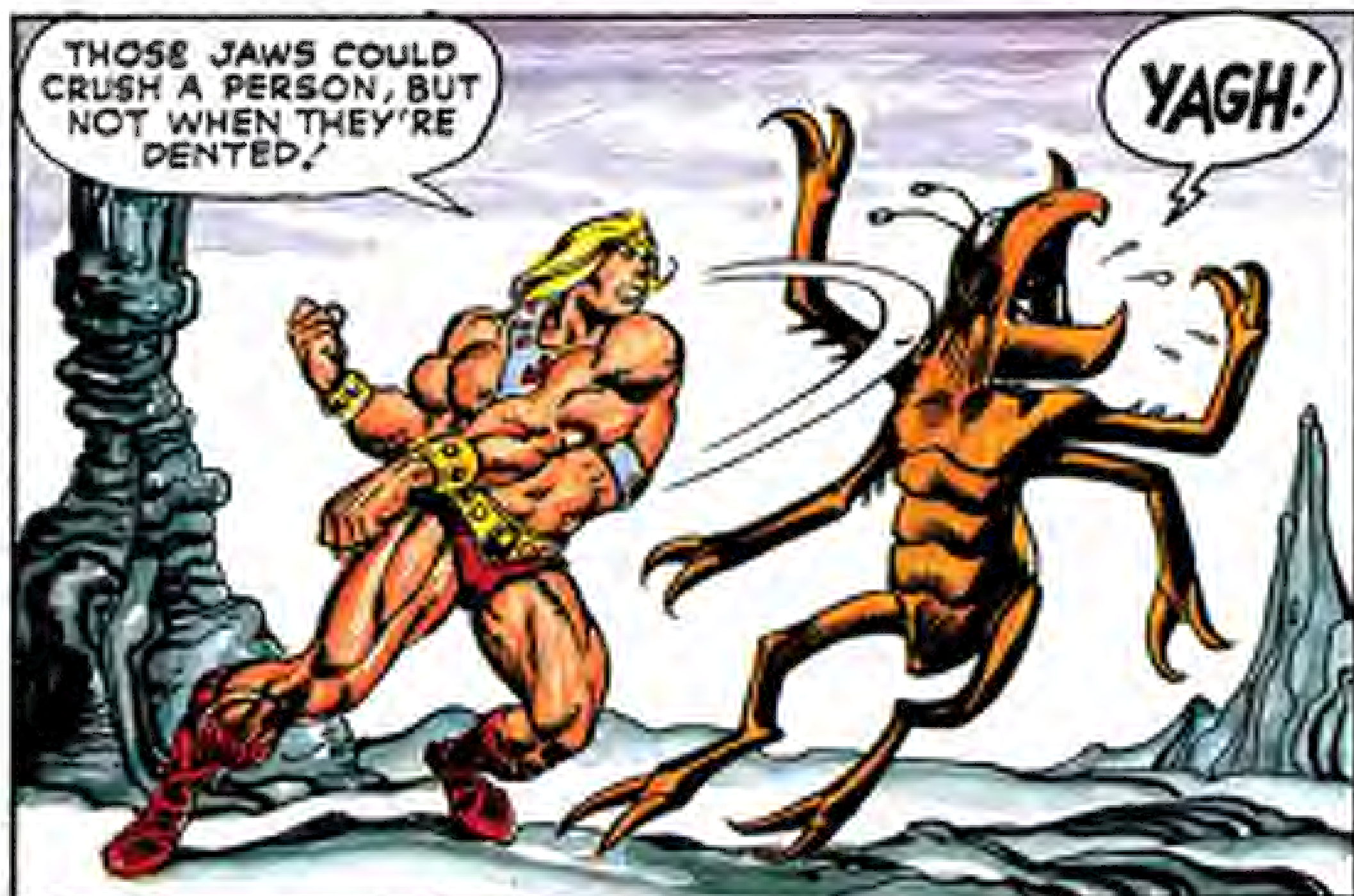
THIS PLACE
IS REALLY
GRUESOME.

WATCH YOUR
STEP. NO TELLING
WHAT'S DOWN
HERE.

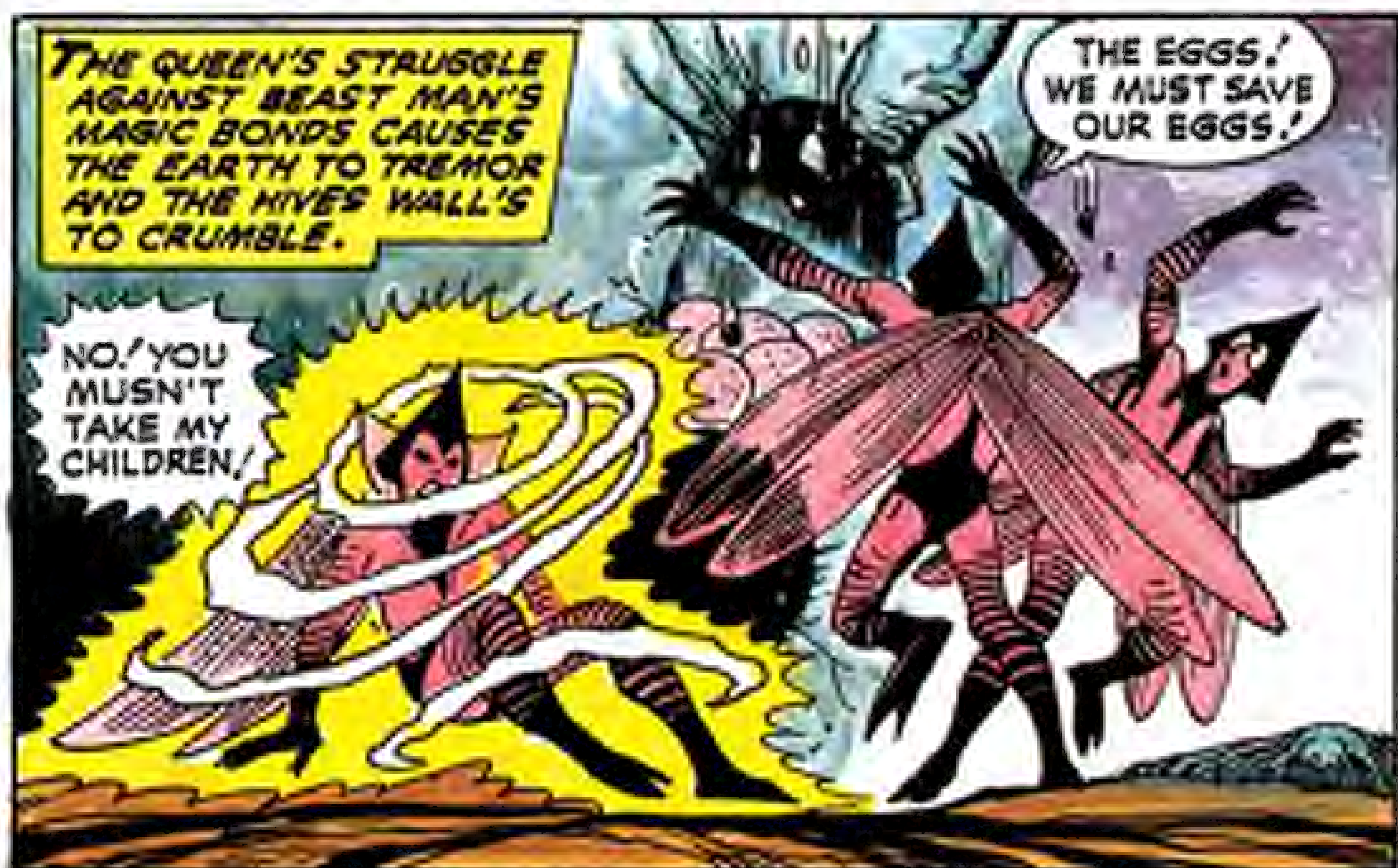
A BOREBUS! IT'S
ALMOST BLIND,
BUT VERY
DEADLY!

BY
ETERNIA!
WHAT'S
THAT?

ZZZZZZZZ!











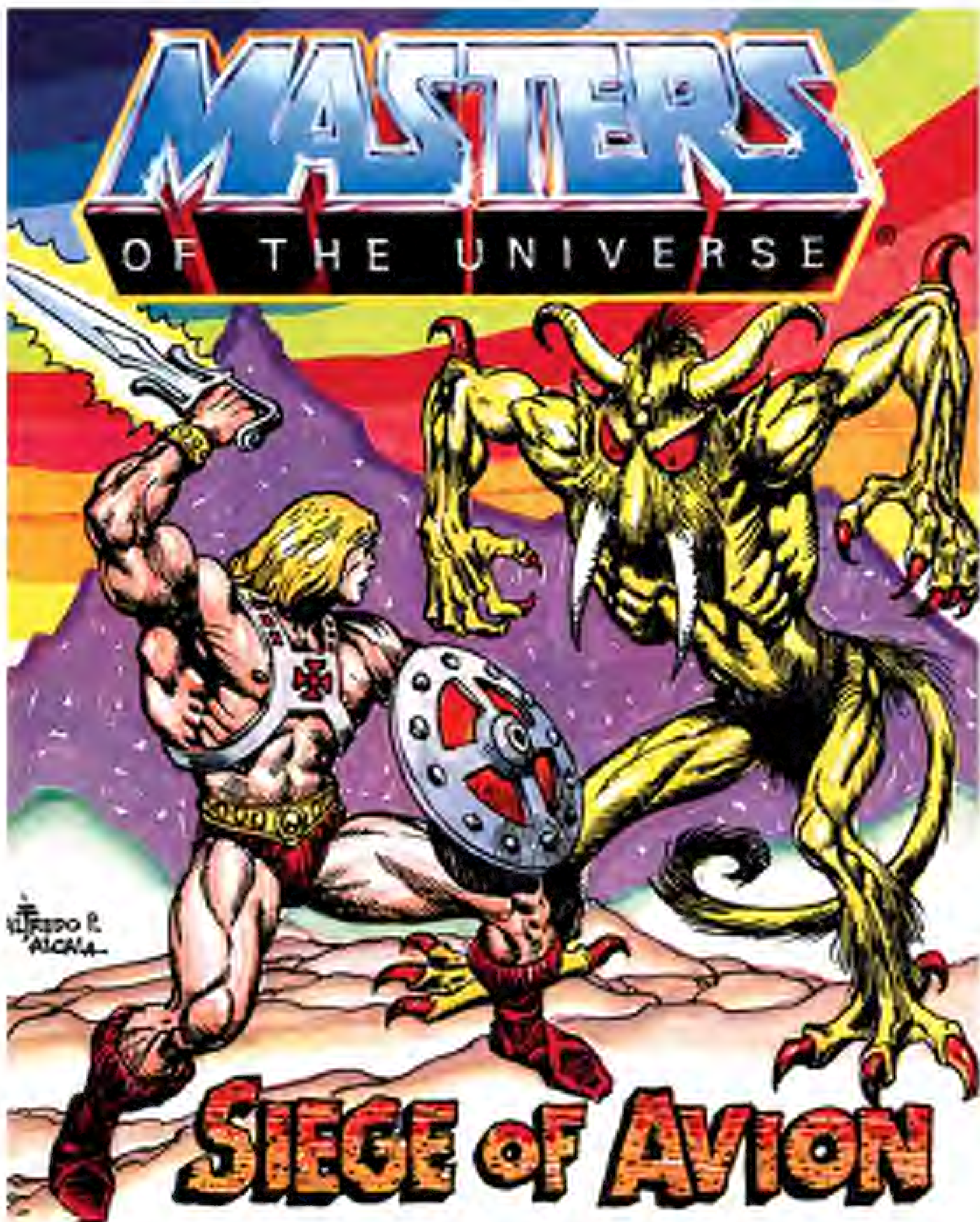












SIEGE of AVION

WRITER
MICHAEL
HALPERIN
ART
ALFREDO
ALCALA

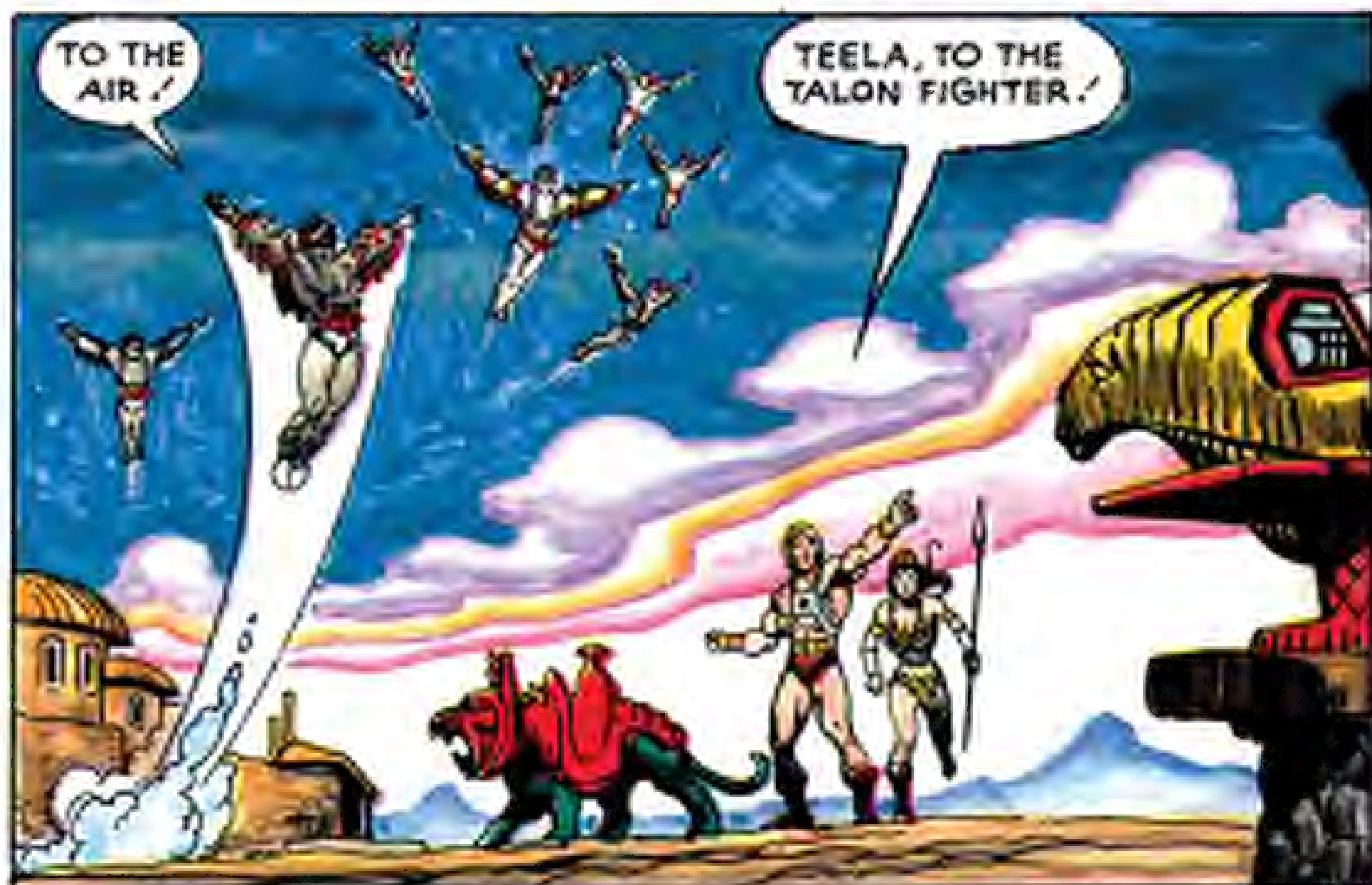
PERCHED HIGH IN THE MYSTIC MOUNTAINS OF ETERNIA RESTS THE FABLED CITY OF AVION--HOME OF STRATOS, HIS HUMAN WIFE, DELORA, AND THE BIRD PEOPLE. EVEN NOW, AS HE-MAN AND HIS FRIENDS, TEELA AND MAN-AT-ARM, VISIT THEIR ALLY--

ILKORTS!
THE ILKORTS
ATTACK!

WHAT THE
DEVIL ARE
ILKORTS?

CREATURES WHO
BURROW BENEATH
THE MOUNTAINS--
OUR SWORN
ENEMIES!









SKELETOR WATCHES THE BATTLE FROM ATOP A CRAGGY PEAK. HE BEARS THE EMERALD STAFF OF AVION IN HIS HAND.

SORRY FOR THE LITTLE DIVERSION, HE-MAN, BUT NOW THE EMERALD STAFF IS MINE. AND I SHALL RAISE THE DEMON HARAMESH TO DESTROY CASTLE GRAYSKULL. HA!

HA! HA!

IT WAS ALL A TRICK TO GET THE STAFF.

WITHOUT IT, WE'LL SLOWLY LOSE OUR FLYING POWER.





HE-MAN AND
THE HEROIC
WARRIORS
OBSERVE
SKELETOR'S
LAIR FROM
AFAR.

SNAKE
MOUNTAIN
SEEMS TO BE
GUARDED BY
AN ARMY.

NO ARMY
CAN STAND
AGAINST
US!







***IN ANOTHER PART OF ETERNIA,
SKELETOR PURSUES HIS EVIL PLAN.***

WITH THE EMERALD
STAFF I COMMAND
YOU, HARAMESH, TO
DESTROY CASTLE
GRAYSKULL.

I WILL DO YOUR
BIDDING... CASTLE
GRAYSKULL IS
DOOMED.





**RACING TO THE CASTLE, HE-MAN FINDS THE
EVIL CULPRIT AND HIS DEVILISH COHORT...**

YOU HAVEN'T
A CHANCE, HE-MAN.
NOT AGAINST THE
MAGIC OF THE
EMERALD STAFF.

BACK, DEMON!
GRAYSKULL
SHALL NEVER
BE YOURS!

KILL,
HE-MAN!



STRATOS DIVES FROM THE SKY TOWARD SKELETOR, SNATCHING THE EMERALD STAFF FROM HIM AND DROPPING IT TO HE-MAN.





PERISH, DEMON--LIKE
ALL THE ENEMIES OF
TRUTH AND JUSTICE!

WE SHALL
MEET AGAIN,
HE-MAN! MARK
MY WORDS!

**VICTORIOUS,
HE-MAN AND
THE HEROIC
WARRIORS
RETURN TO
AVION WITH
STRATOS AND
DELORA.**

HAIL,
HE-MAN,
HAIL!

IT'S GOOD TO
SEE DELORA
SAFE AND THE
TWO OF YOU
TOGETHER
ONCE MORE.

WE HAVE YOU TO THANK, MY
FRIEND. AND THE EMERALD STAFF
IS BACK WHERE
IT BELONGS...
IN AVION.

AND SKELETOR
IS BACK WHERE
HE BELONGS--
AT SNAKE
MOUNTAIN.

BUT NOT
FOR LONG
IF I KNOW
HIM!

THE
END



MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE



ALBERTO P. MUCAIA

THE OBELISK

ONCE A YEAR A GREAT OBELISK RISES FROM THE GROUND. ITS POWERS AND MEANING ARE ALWAYS DIFFERENT. HE-MAN AND SKELETOR WILL SOON RACE TO FIND THE MYSTERY OF THE OBELISK.



WRITER:
KAREN SARGENTICH

ARTIST:
ALFREDO P. ALCALA



THERE'S NOTHING DOWN
AT THE BOTTOM... NOTHING
IN THE MIDDLE... WHAT'S
THIS? THERE ARE SOME
WORDS HERE AT THE
TOP, BUT I CAN'T
MAKE THEM OUT.



SKELETOR SEES THE OBELISK FROM AFAR...

AHA! THE OBELISK
HAS COME AGAIN.
THIS TIME WE WILL
BE FIRST TO FIND
THE SECRET AND
USE ITS
POWER FOR
EVIL DEEDS!

DOESN'T LOOK
LIKE ANYTHING
GREAT TO ME!

BE SILENT. THE
OBELISK HOLDS
POWERFUL SECRETS!



HE-MAN AND HIS FRIENDS ARE ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE OBELISK. WE'LL APPROACH FROM THE SOUTH.

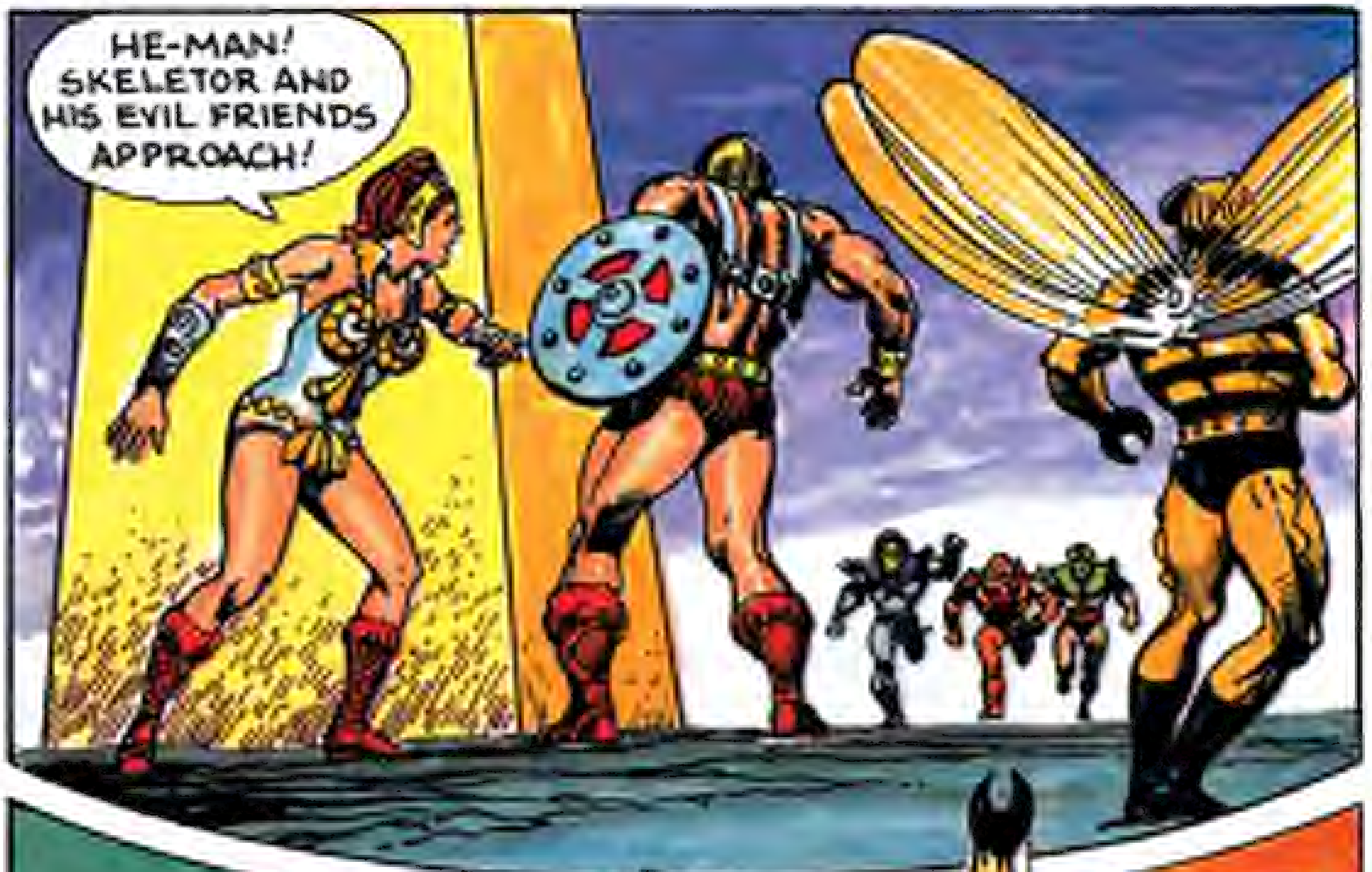
I'M READY FOR A FIGHT!

I'LL TRY MY SPECIAL VISION TO READ THE WORDS ON THE TOP OF THE OBELISK... WE'LL FIND OUT THE SECRET!



SKELETOR, TRI-KLOPS AND BEAST MAN CHARGE TOWARD THE OBELISK...











SORCERESS, SEER
OF THE PAST AND
FUTURE, COME TO
US NOW. HELP US
KNOW WHAT IT
IS WE SEE!



**THE SKY
CHURNS
AND THE
SORCERESS
APPEARS.**

AHHH... THE
WRITINGS ON THE
OBELISK. A PROPHECY
OF THINGS TO COME.
ENORMOUS POWERS
ARE TRAPPED INSIDE
BUT THERE ARE
GOOD POWERS AND
EVIL POWERS... BOTH
CAN BE RELEASED.
YOUR ONLY HOPE
IS TO HAVE THE
GOOD POWERS
RELEASED.



IF YOU SAY "POWER TO GOOD," THE OBELISK WILL RELEASE SOMETHING TO HELP YOU IN BATTLE. BUT IF SKELETOR SAYS "POWER TO EVIL," HE WILL BE GIVEN A VILLAIN TO FIGHT AGAINST YOU. DO NOT LET HIM LEARN ABOUT THE WORDS.



SKELETOR HAS HEARD EVERY THING...

I'VE GOT YOU NOW HE-MAN! MY ARMY WILL GET SO STRONG EVEN YOU CAN'T STOP ME!





HE-MAN AND MEKANECK
GRAB PHOTON RAYS THROWN
FROM THE OBELISK.



POWER
TO EVIL!



DRAT, NOW
AN EVIL POWER
WILL COME
TO ETERNIA.



FLYING OUT OF THE OBELISK...

I CAN ESCAPE
HORRID SITUATIONS...
I CAN HELP RESCUE
OTHERS. I FIGHT
FOR EVIL!



**POWER
TO GOOD!**

**EACH COMMAND SENDS OUT
A NEW WARRIOR...**

**POWER
TO EVIL!**



I FIGHT ON THE
SIDE OF GOOD.
I SEARCH AND
DESTROY!



I MOW DOWN
ANYTHING IN MY
PATH. I FIGHT
FOR EVIL.









HE-MAN AND THE SORCERESS WATCH A SCENE UNFOLD THROUGH THE MISTS OF SIGHT--THE SORCERESS' MAGIC WINDOW TO THE WORLD.



LOOK,
HE-MAN.

ISN'T THAT PRINCE DAKON?
HE WAS ONE OF YOUR
CHILDHOOD FRIENDS AND
NOW HE'S IN
GRAVE TROUBLE!

BY GRAYSKULL!
IT IS DAKON. I
MUST HELP HIM!

RUN, PRINCE
DAKON! RUN FOR YOUR
LIFE! DO NOT LET GELDOR
CAPTURE YOU!

CURSES!
DAKON IS
GETTING AWAY!

AHH, BUT I HAVE
YOU, TORGUL, AND
SHORTLY--

I
WILL HAVE
YOUR
SECRET!

**"THE SECRET
LIQUID
OF LIFE"**

EDITOR: LEE NORDLING
WRITER: MICHAEL HALPERIN
PENCILER: LARRY HOUSTON
INKER: MICHAEL LEE
LETTERER: STAN SAKAI
COLORIST: CHARLES SIMPSON

SOMEWHERE IN THE EVERGREEN FOREST, HE-MAN AND THE HEROIC WARRIORS FIND DAKON.

MY RADAR TELLS ME NO ONE IS NEAR. IT'S SAFE TO TALK NOW.

GELDOR WANTS THE SECRET LIQUID OF LIFE--

--AND ONLY TORGUL KNOWS WHERE IT IS!

IF WHAT YOU'VE SAID IS TRUE, THEN ALL ETERNIA IS IN TROUBLE!

WE CAN'T STAND AROUND HERE!

OH BOY!
OH BOY!

MAYBE THERE'LL BE WORK FOR ME!

WE MUST GO TO WHERE THEY'RE KEEPING TORGUL!

MEANYWHILE, TORGUL IS HELD CAPTIVE IN GELDOR'S DARK AND SECRET DUNGEON.



YOU WOULD ONLY USE IT TO DO EVIL TO ALL GOOD PEOPLE!



WIZARD, FETCH TORGUL'S DAUGHTER!





FATHER,
HELP ME!
HELP ME!

MARAN, MY CHILD!
WHAT HAVE THEY
DONE?

ALL RIGHT!
THE SECRET
LIQUID OF
LIFE IS BURIED
IN THE OGRE'S
CAVERN IN THE
MYSTIC
MOUNTAINS.

NOW,
LET HER
GO!

HOW CAN ONE LET GO
OF AN ILLUSION?

NOOOO!
WHAT HAVE
I DONE?!



• Dink is depicted with a completely different look, including a yellow tunic and hair that is not so dark. During the production of the first of the Lamy House (Baker and Monahan's) Jay Williamson cartoon was also in development. As a result, we see a number of color and design changes over the course of a small number of episodes. As the reference material was constantly on the

AND THE STRENGTH
OF MY STING!





DEEP INSIDE THE DUNGEON, THE
HEROIC WARRIORS AT LAST
FIND TORGUL!

THANK
GOODNESS
WE FOUND YOU
IN TIME!

I BELIEVED THEM AND TOLD
THEM *EVERYTHING*!

TOO LATE. THE
EVIL ONES TOLD ME
THEY HAD MY DAUGHTER,
MARAN.

~~~~~  
MARAN?  
~~~~~

WE WERE
TO BE
MARRIED!

TORGUL, YOU MUST TAKE
US TO THE SECRET LIQUID
BEFORE GELDOR AND HIS
MONSTERS GET THERE!

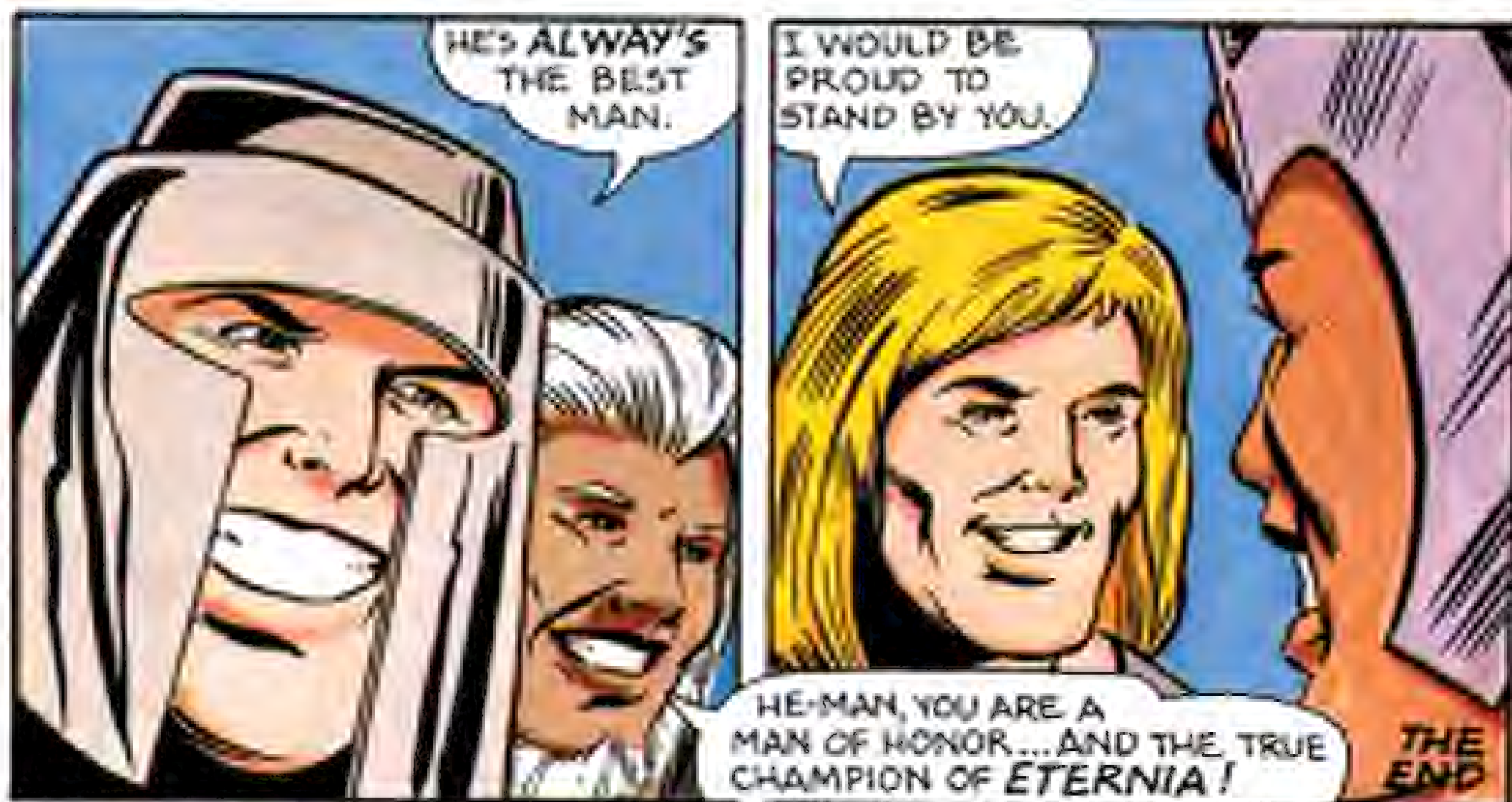
















PRINCE ADAM AND CRINGER EXPLORE THE WILDS OF THE VINE JUNGLE WHEN, OUT OF THE THICKEST FOLIAGE, MAN-EATING PLANTS ATTACK AND BEGIN TO CRUSH THEM WITH THEIR TENDRILS.

DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

BY ETERNIA!
THEY WANT TO
EAT US. I'VE NEVER
SEEN ANYTHING LIKE
THESE! HOLD ON,
CRINGER--

EDITOR-LEE NORDLING
PENCILER-LARRY HOUSTON
INKER-MICHAEL LEE
LETTERER-STAN SAKAI
COLORIST-CHARLES SIMPSON



KABOOM!

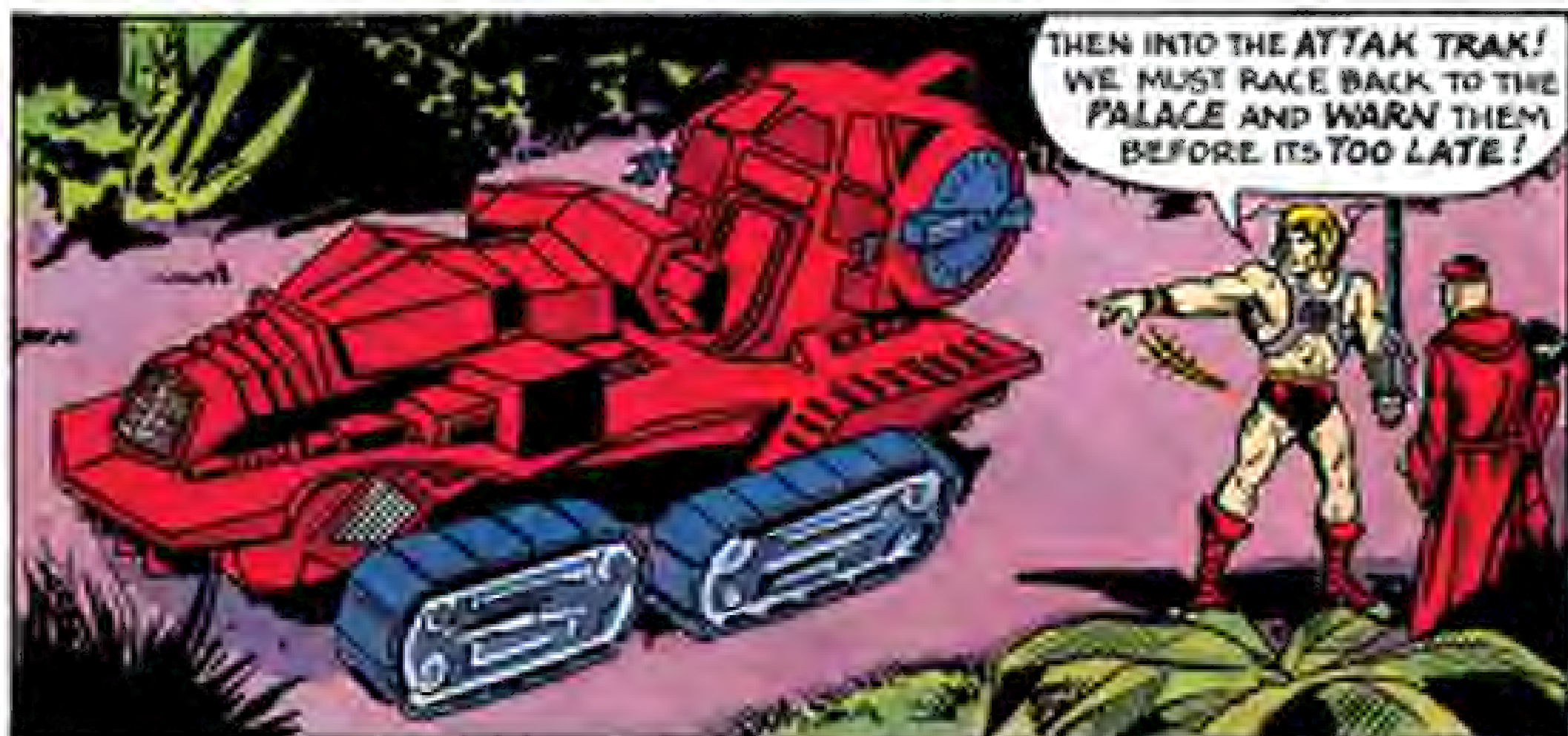


GROWROARRRR! AND FEEL THE FURY OF MY CLAWS!









- Skeletor's skin is colored to be more like a red dragon by Bob Lynn. It's a little like a pinkish-red dragon-skin instead of the grey.
- Teela's armor is now closer to the original film version and says "Skeletor" but it's a little different.

MY VINE MONSTERS
DIDN'T STOP THAT
MEDDLING OLD MAN
AND CHILD.



NO MATTER... WE SHALL STILL MAKE
SHORT WORK OF THE PALACE AND
EVERYONE IN IT!

WAIT UNTIL TEELA
GETS A TASTE OF MY
VENOM.



AND I HAVE A VERY
SPECIAL SURPRISE
THAT HE-MAN SHALL
CERTAINLY FALL FOR!









WITH HE-MAN OUT OF THE WAY, SKELETOR CALLS UP THE VINE MONSTERS TO FINISH THE BATTLE.

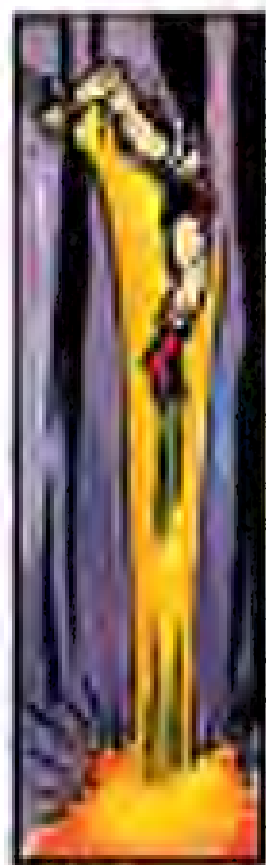
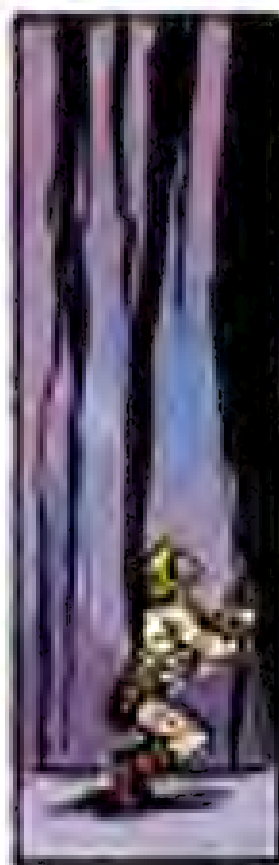
GO! MY PRETTY PLANTS. SHOW THEM THE POWER OF YOUR EVIL NATURE!

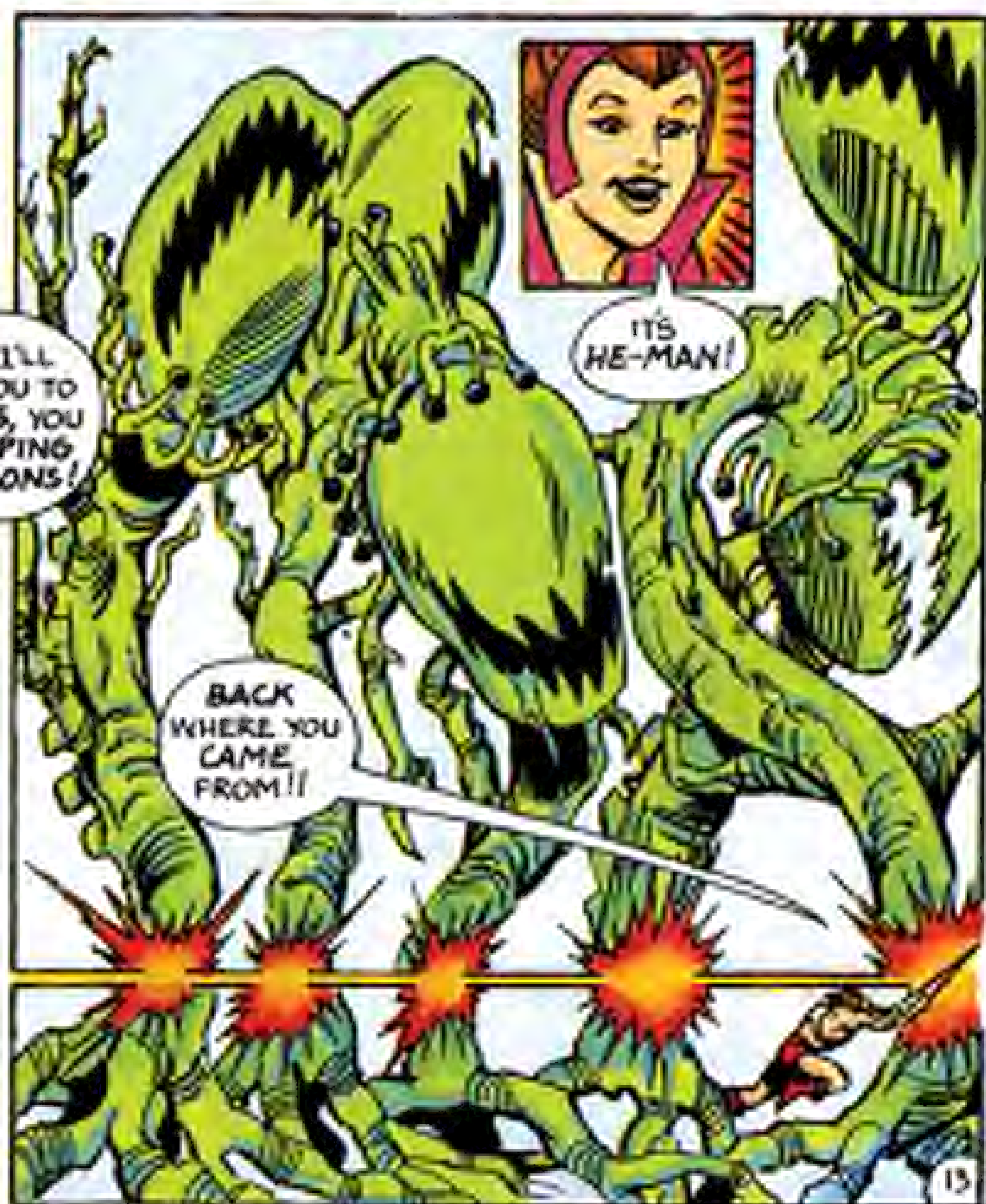
THE LIGHT FROM MY LASER AND PHOTON GUNS ONLY SEEM TO MAKE THEM GROW!

AND I JUST BOUNCE OFF!

ONLY HE-MAN HAS THE STRENGTH TO CHOP THEM DOWN TO SIZE!













ZOAR, THE MYSTICAL FALCON SORCERESS,
SOARS ABOVE THE DESOLATE SANDS OF TIME.



UNAWARE THAT SHE IS BEING WATCHED
FROM BELOW--



SHE CIRCLED
TOO CLOSE
TO THE...



- John Deane's Falcon was originally a development title at Fox, but it was later passed to the Masters of the Universe producers, who adapted it.
- The story is based on the film "The Falcon" (1957).

TRAPPED IN
SKELETOR'S
DUNGEON
OF EVIL...



...THE SORCERESS SENDS OUT
A CRY FOR HELP.

HE-MAN, I AM
IN GRAVE PERIL.
COME QUICKLY--
THE TEMPLE OF
DARKNESS, THE
SANDS OF
TIME!



THE SORCERESS
NEEDS OUR HELP!

TEELA, RAM-MAN,
MAN-AT-ARMS--



MAKE READY TO
LEAVE AT ONCE!

READY
FOR
ACTION!

BY ETERNIA!
IF THE SORCERESS
NEEDS US, LET'S
GET MOVING!



HO-BOY! I'M
READY TO GO!

INSIDE THE TEMPLE, SKELETOR GUARDS HIS FALCON TREASURE WHILE HE WATCHES HE-MAN AND THE HEROIC WARRIORS APPROACH.



COME, SCARAB.
JEWEL OF THE
DESERT.

YOU SHALL
HELP ME
DEFEAT THESE
INTRUDERS!

A SANDSTORM
TO GREET
THEM!





HE-MAN!

THE
SAND!

I CAN'T SEE
ANYTHING!



I'LL JUST HAVE TO
UNWIND THIS
TORNADO--

FROM THE
INSIDE
OUT!



THAT...
TAKES...
CARE
OF...



THAT!





AND NO ONE, NOT
EVEN YOU, CAN
STOP ME!

TIME
DEMONS!

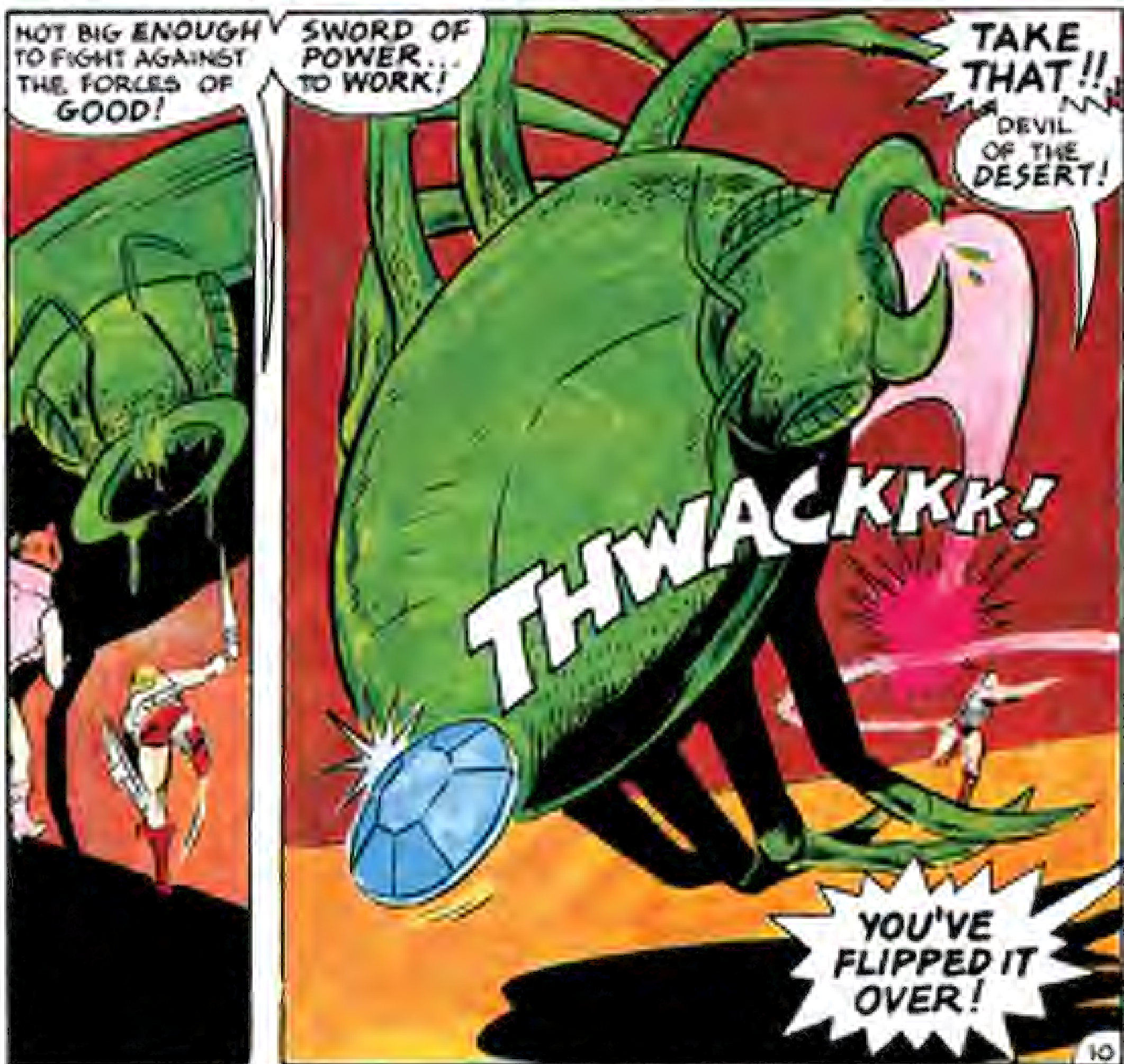
HE-MAN, BE
CAREFUL! ONCE
THEY GET YOU
IN THEIR
CLUTCHES...

YOU'LL BE
TRAPPED FOREVER
IN TIME!















BACK TO
GRAYSKULL...

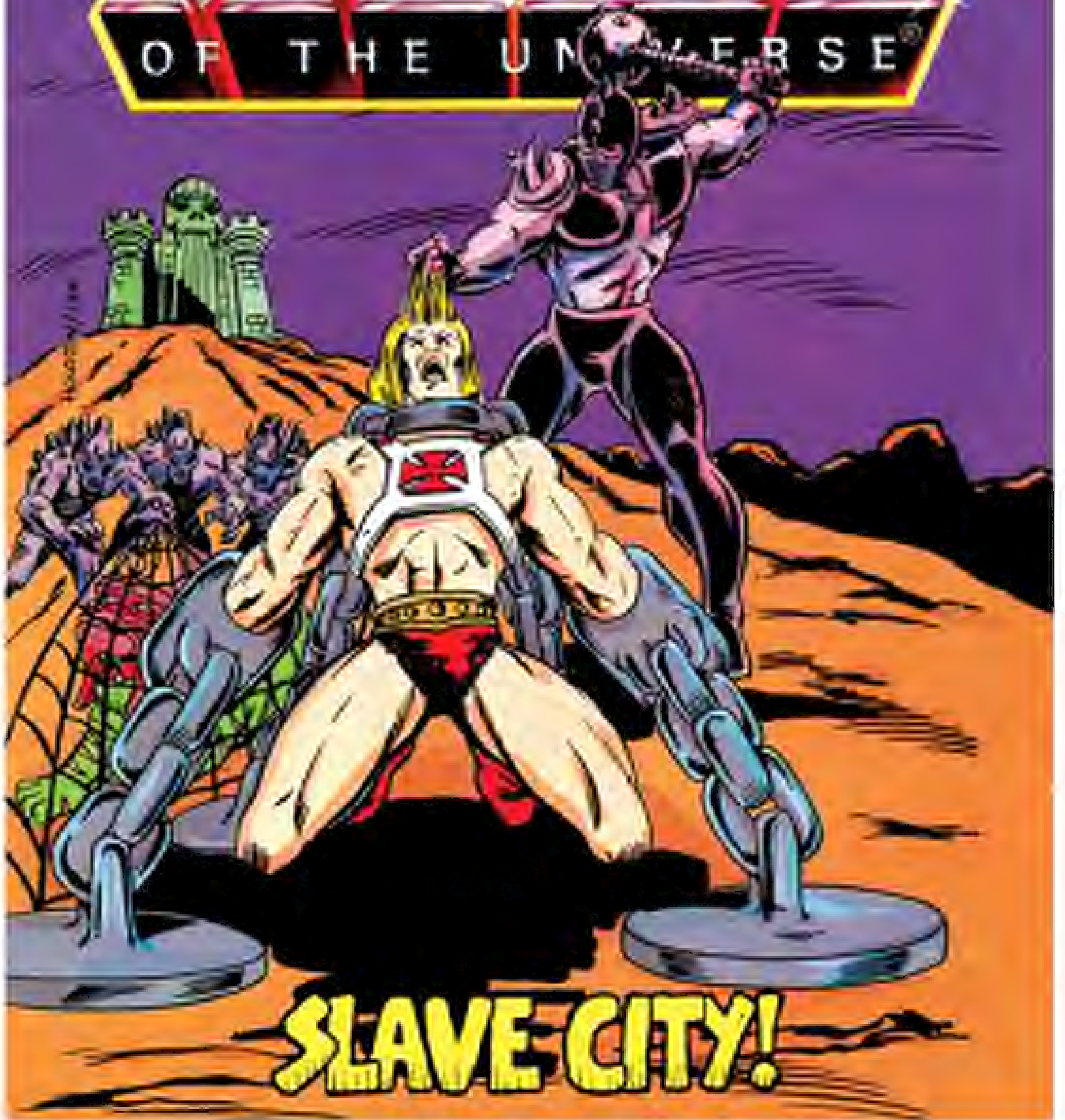
...AND EVEN MORE
ADVENTURES!!



END



MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE®



SLAVE CITY

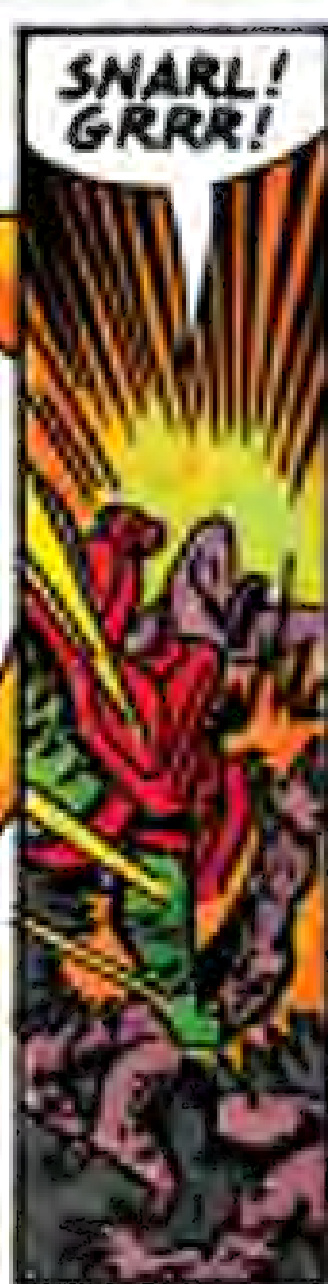
PRINCE ADAM AND HIS COMPANION, CRINGER, ENJOY AN OUTING IN THE EVERGREEN FOREST WHEN...

CRINGER! LOOK!
THOSE KOBOLDS HAVE A
CAPTIVE. QUICK, WE
MUST HELP HER!

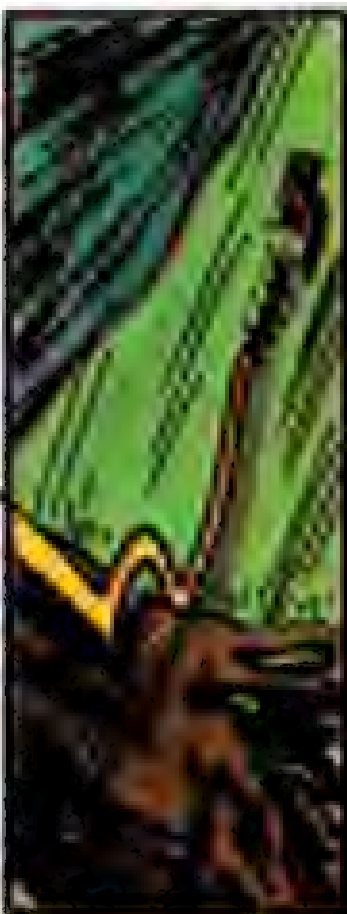
LET'S
GET OUT OF
HERE. IT'S
NONE
OF OUR
BUSINESS!

HELP!
SOMEONE
HELP
ME !!!

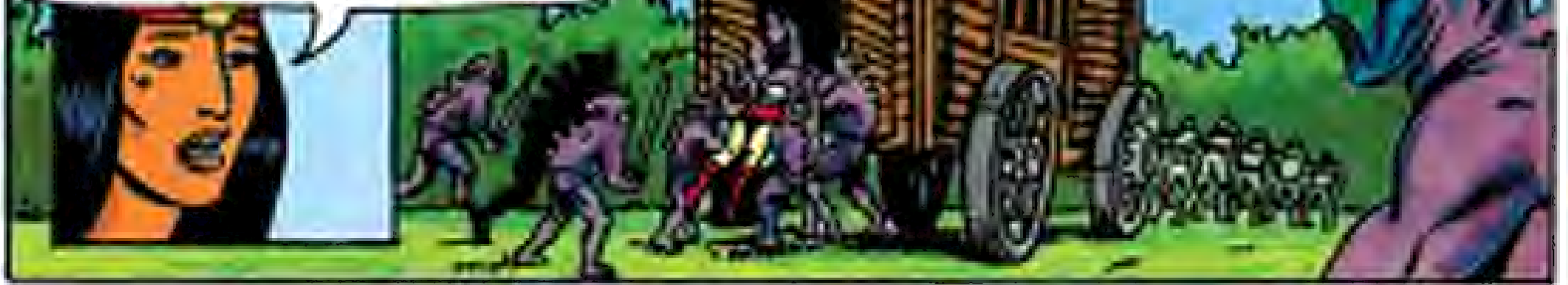
YELL,
PRETTY ONE.
NO ONE TO HELP YOU.
WE TAKE TO
TARGA!





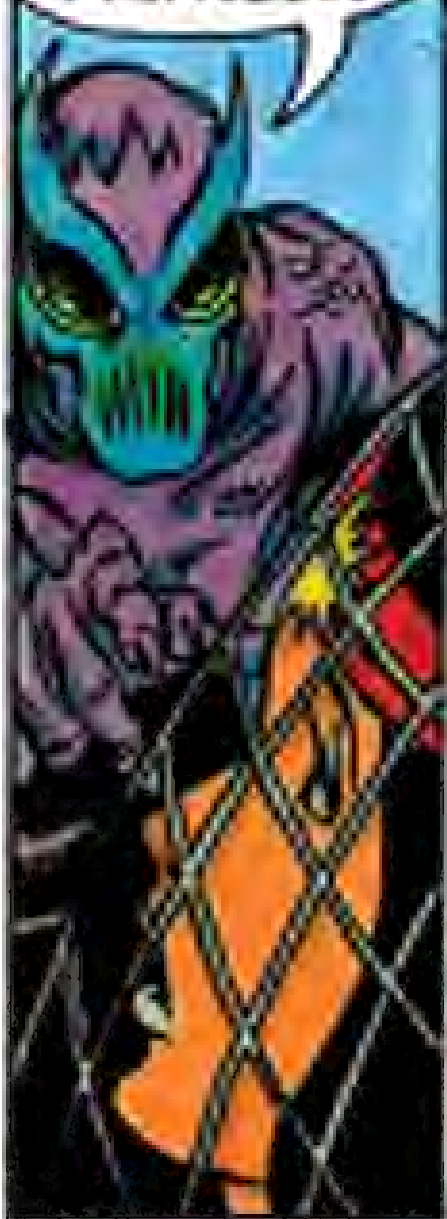


THEY WILL THROW HIM INTO THEIR
DUNGEON WHERE SO MANY OF MY
PEOPLE HAVE **DISAPPEARED!**



**SNARL! A
TRAP! RUN
RANA!!!**

**TOO LATE!
LODAR WANT
PRINCESS!**



**WELL, WHAT BE THIS
PERSON THAT LODAR'S
FOUL BEASTS DRAG IN?**

**I--I DON'T
KNOW. I CAN'T
REMEMBER MY NAME
OR WHO I AM!**

**YE BE LUCKY,
YOUNG 'UN.
THEM WHAT
REMEMBERS
FARE NOT
WELL!**







STAND BACK! THIS SHALL BE MY WISH...
GARN AND THE STRANGER WILL FIGHT IN THE ARENA OF DEATH! THE VICTOR WILL GO FREE!



I BEAR NO ILL AGAINST YOU, **GARN**.





NOW I REMEMBER!



I AM
HE-MAN!















You're a prolific artist and animator. Not only have you worked on *He-Man*, but you've also tackled other iconic properties, such as *X-Men*, *Fantastic Four*, *G.I. Joe*, and many more. Can you talk a bit about your background as an animator and illustrator?

I actually started out as a computer repair technician for CTE and then became a systems analyst for McDonnell Douglas after high school. Friends of mine who were working at Hanna-Barbera kept encouraging me to make the jump to animation, but I hesitated for several years until I had my own personal epiphany about being an artist now instead of later. I then saved up enough backup money to take a chance at a new career, in case I failed miserably. I was in my midtwenties when I made the jump, quitting my computer job before getting my animation job. That was a decision I would not endorse today, folks. The world was quite different back then.

I failed several Filmmation layout solo with the head of layout, Herb Kuzelson. I thought I had made the worst mistake ever. But my personal comic book pages with my own superhero characters (I was publishing my own fanzine called *The Experiments*) were seen by Herb, and he saw my sequential storytelling

potential. He got me a meeting and a one with the head of storyboard, Don Christensen. I impressed him by turning my test in overnight and with its quality. He actually replaced some work already in the show he was working on with my test, and I was hired the same day. That's how my storyboarding career in animation began.

Filmmation was one of the very few studios headed up by executives that actually liked cartoons. I remember working on several shows there: *Spot Bull*, *Tarzan*, *Flash Gordon*, *Baro*, and *Blackstar*. After one seasonal layoff, new shows debuted in September on network TV, and studios seasonally laid off most of their staff from about October to January. I went to work for Stan Lee's newly formed Marvel Productions studio on a syndicated *Spider-Man* series with director Art Vaillo, then moved on to *Spider-Man* and *His Amazing Friends* with director Don Jarvich (Rick Hoberg and I drew some of the episodic title cards, by the way), several *G.I. Joe* five-part miniseries prior to the full ninety-five-episode series, *Pryde of the X-Men*, *Jeepers*, *The Incredible Hulk*, *Bigfoot* and the *Muscle Machine*, *Dynomite of the Earth*, and *Jem*.

G.I. Joe is where I got my chance to write an episode ("Hearts and Cannons") and direct several epi-

series (such as "The Million Dollar Movie"). I wrote one Spider-Man and His Amazing Friends episode ("Swarm"): although I didn't get credit, I got paid for it (and I still have the paperwork to prove it).

Because so much more animation was being done in the US than the available talent could handle, a good storyboard artist could freelance at several studios and cash in. I remember working freelance on other fun shows like *Thunder*, *The Mighty Orbots*, *Micro T*, *Galactic Guardians*, *The Prince of Dark Water*, *Visionaries*, and most of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*.

How did you wind up working on the *Masters of the Universe* minicomics?

Lee Nordling was a longtime friend from CAPS (Comic Art Professional Society) who had seen my adventure work over the years and asked me if I would be interested in doing He-Man. I said sure, and we would meet at Lee's house to go over the script and what was needed or required, and then I would go home and draw up the pages. Lee used a lot of CAPS members on the series.

Your *Slave City* minicomic cover looks pretty brutal. I heard there was some outcry from parents about that. How did Mattel react to that cover illustration?

Slave City was just me having fun, channeling some of the Marvel Comics action scenes into the minicomic. What I now know, in hindsight, is that I kind of forgot that, one, this was for Mattel Toys, not Marvel, and two, Mattel wanted this to be for a younger age group. Lee didn't have a problem with it, and neither did Mattel when I turned it in. Mattel never had a problem with the cover or the interior artwork. It wasn't until some parents complained to Mattel later that they noticed what they had published and what I had done. Lee took most of the flak and told me that would be my last assignment, because of the blowback, which I understood. Lee finished the assignment with other artists. I was working on *Spider-Man and His Amazing Friends* and *G.I. Joe* at the same time, so I took it in stride.

You also penciled *The Powers of Grayskull Part 1: The Legend Begins!* He-Man's ancestor He-Ro was being introduced at this time. Do you have

any recollections of He-Ro and what was planned for the character?

On this, my memory is poor. I was only privy to the scripts given to me by Lee Nordling. The writing was done by others.

Only part 1 of the *Powers of Grayskull* minicomic was ever produced. Do you remember doing any layouts for parts 2 and 3?

No, I never worked on those issues.

Were there any minicomic stories that got rejected before you started penciling them, or were there any you started on that got changed or shelved?

No, pretty much every story I was given to draw was published. One thing I brought to the books was the two-page spread. Inspired by Jack Kirby's double-pagers, I placed out the script so that I could add big action layouts. It was always a surprise for Lee to discover where I had placed them. I still have some of the original art from those minicomics and will be selling it at the next Power-Con.

What was it like working with the other creators on the minicomics?

Lee Nordling actually worked with all the artists, not me. I knew the other artists he was working with because we were all members of CAPS or worked together at the different animation studios. Lee was the man in charge, the clearinghouse of all the production crew, from the writers to the pencilers to the inkers to the letterers to the colorists.

You are often credited with encouraging more diversity in the MOTU minicomics. How did that come about?

Having worked on lots of Hasbro properties at Marvel Productions, I knew to always ask for the toy model. When I got the first script, I asked Lee, where are the toy models? He said there weren't any for the supporting characters. I asked him if Vangel was going to supply any designs for me. He said no, they were not. So then I went ahead and created my own original designs for Celdor and others and expanded the He-Man universe with more



racial cultures. TV animation was just starting to become progressive and show other racial groups, but it was a gradual transition. I designed good and bad Asians, good and bad blacks, and good and bad Native Americans for He-Man's world. For me, there was no problem showing minority villains, as long as you had minority heroes as well. This idea continued with every script I got.

You designed the villainous Geldor in *The Secret Liquid of Life*. Was Geldor's Mohawk an intentional nod to Mr. T, or not?

Probably. I had been working freelance on the *Mr. T* show from the Rupp-Spears animation studio during that time, I believe. The design of Geldor flowed out of my pencils unconsciously. The first time I drew him, that was him. It was very instinctual.

Did you work on *She-Ra* at all?

No, I didn't, although I came close to working on it. My scheduling at Marvel Productions prevented me from doing so.

You penciled *The Smell of Evil*? What was your reaction upon learning that the minicomic's chief antagonist was a smelly skunk man named Skunkor?

I laughed. Then my first thought was that He-Man was going to fight Looney Tunes' Pepe Le Pew! Then the artistic part of me thought, how the heck am I going to show stench on paper? My training was in animation—things that moved across the screen. I eventually figured it out and made it work.

Did you have fun meeting Masters of the Universe fans at Power-Con, the Masters of the Universe convention? What was the experience like for you?

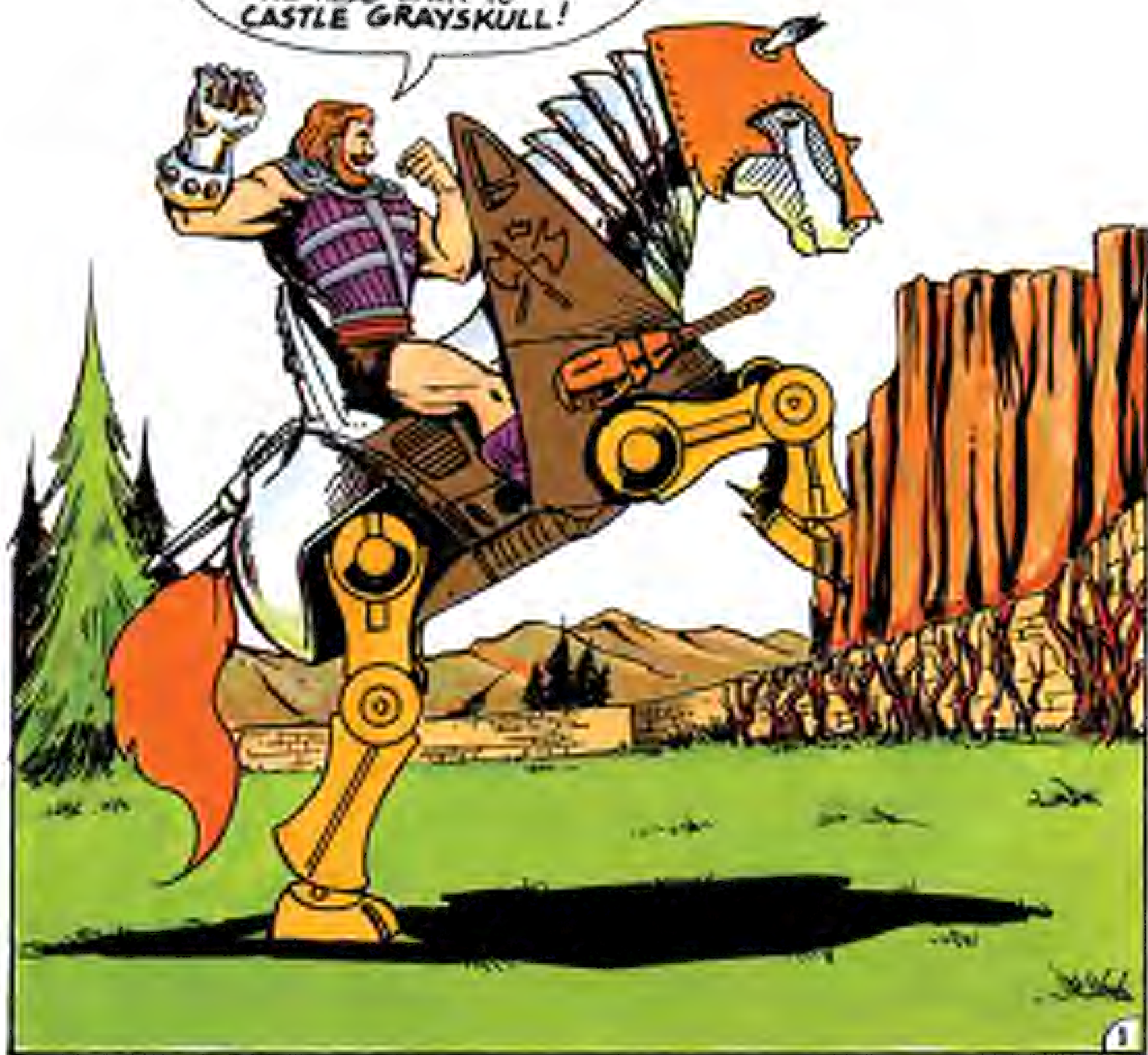
I've had a wonderful time at every Power-Con I've attended. I love talking with the fans of the minicomics, and Danielle Gelfinger has done a superb job of coordination at these events. Public speaking was never my forte. I like being the one taking the picture, not being in it. But these Power-Cons have been very helpful in helping me become more comfortable with public speaking, and I thank Danielle for that. Thank you, Danielle! ☺



THE CLASH OF ARMS

CHARGED WITH THE TASK OF SLOWING ETERNIA, FISTO AND STRIDOR, STEED OF STEEL, MAKE THEIR WAY ACROSS THE FIELDS OF EVERMORE.

STRIDOR,
UP AHEAD-- THE
GREAT WALL. LET'S CHECK ITS
BORDERS FOR SIGNS OF
UNWANTED VISITORS BEFORE
WE HEAD BACK TO
CASTLE GRAYSKULL!



























HE-MAN, MARK MY WORDS. YOU WILL PAY DEARLY FOR THIS!



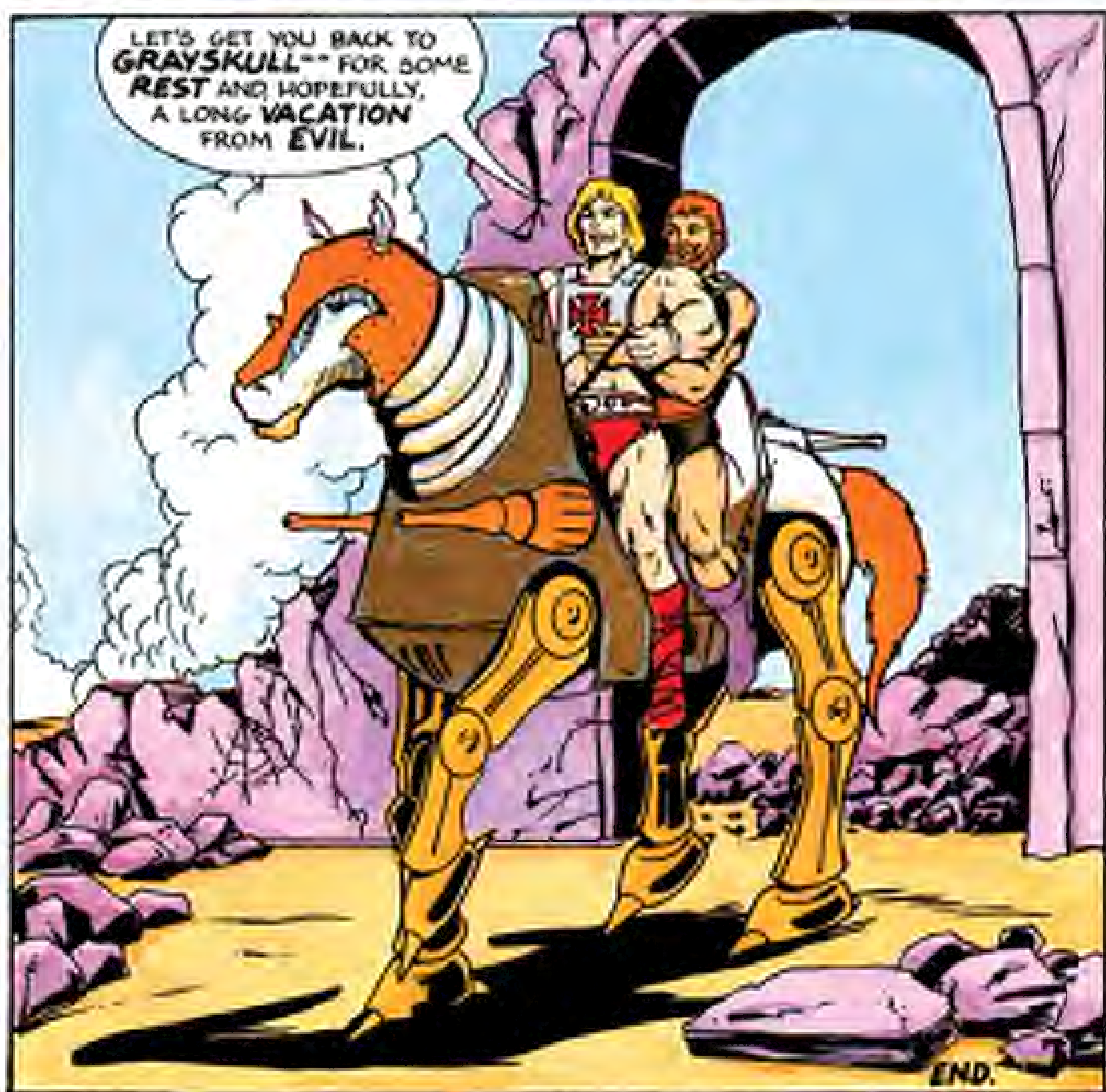
FISTO, MY FRIEND. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? HERE, LET ME HELP YOU TO YOUR FEET!

I FOUGHT HARD, HE-MAN, BUT I COULD NOT DEFEAT THEM ALL!

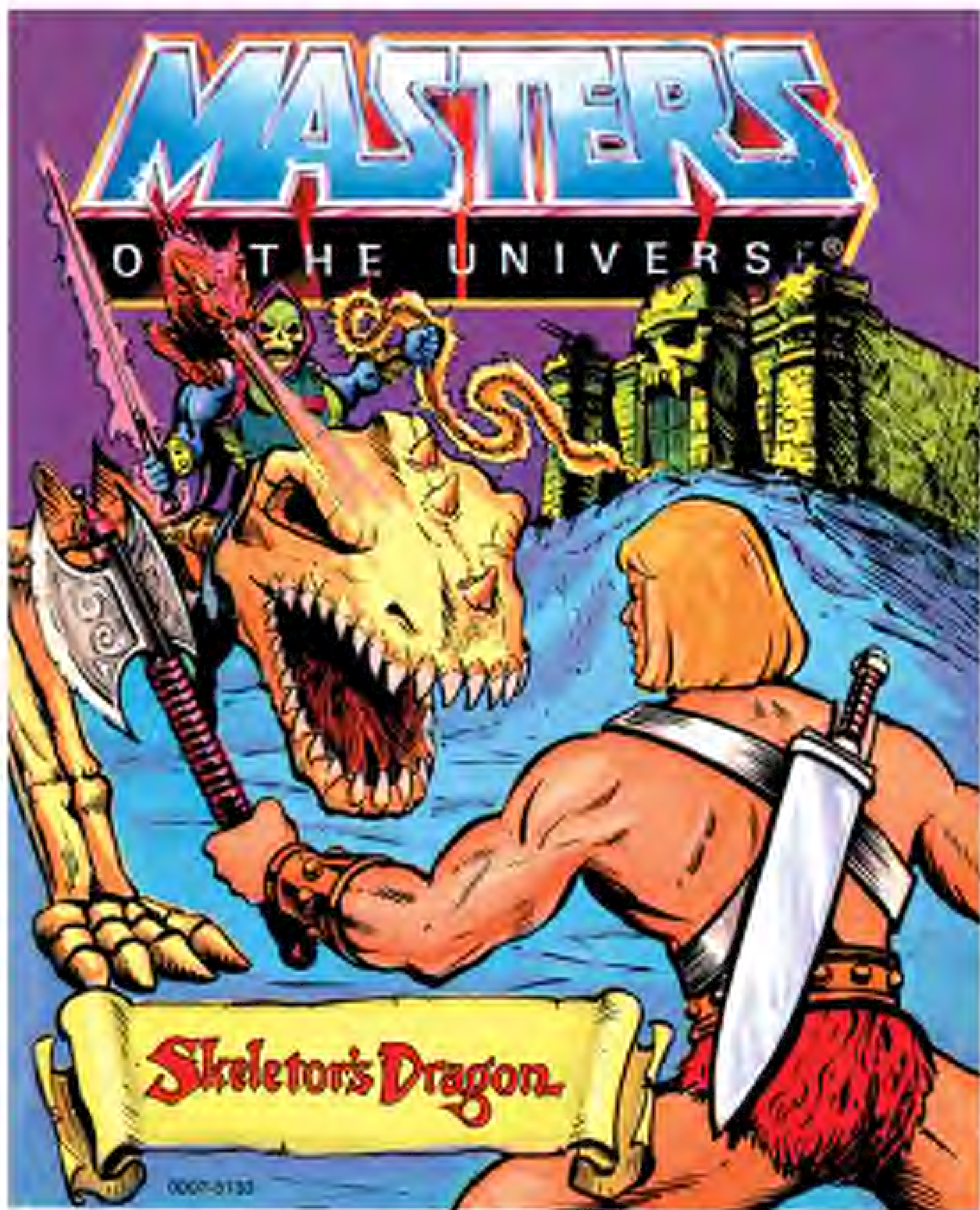


YOU CAME IN THE VERY NICK OF TIME!

YOU CAN THANK YOUR GOOD STEED, STRIDOR, FOR THAT!







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Skeletor's Dragon













MAN-E-FACES, RAM MAN AND
MEKANEK HURRY TO REACH THE
TOURNAMENT!



I HEAR
CHEERING,
MEKANEK! WE'RE LATE!
CAN YOU SEE ANYTHING?



NOT YET,
BUT... I SEE
SOMETHING
ELSE, SOMETHING
HUGE, HEADING
RIGHT FOR US!



IT'S **SKELETOR**
ON SOME KIND
OF **MONSTER**!



I'LL STAY HERE AND DO
BATTLE! YOU MUST
HURRY AND WARN
ETERNIA!



NONE OF YOU
WILL GO ANYWHERE
WHEN MY MYSTIC
CHAINS HAVE
CAUGHT YOU!



THE CHAINS ARE
DRAINING OUR
POWER FROM
US!

I FEEL
WEAKER!



WE'LL GET **LOOSE**,
SKELETOR, AND **THEN...**



SPRAY THEM,
DRAGON!



SO DO THEY FALL UNDER
THE EFFECT OF MY DRAGON'S
HYPNO-MIST!



HOLD THEM TIGHT,
BATTLE BONES! THEY
MUST NOT ESCAPE
WHEN THEY WAKE!



SOON, ALL THE
HERDES OF
ETERNIA WILL
FALL BEFORE
ME!











FORGIVE ME, WARRIORS!
I WAS THE PRISONER OF
SKELETOR'S EVIL MAGIC!
HEAR MY SAD TALE!

ONCE, IN AGES BEYOND
COUNTING, I WAS A
LIVING CREATURE!



...I WALKED THIS WORLD
WITH OTHERS OF MY KIND
AND I WAS A **KING**
AMONG THEM!

BUT WE WERE THE
LAST TO LIVE!



ONE DAY, MY MATE **DIED** AND THERE WERE
NONE LEFT BUT ME!



FOR A TIME, I
WANDERED ALONE
IN DISTANT LANDS...

AT LAST, I LAID
MYSELF DOWN TO
REST FOREVER!



AND THERE I REMAINED,
UNTIL SKELETOR RAISED
ME WITH HIS EVIL SPELL!



IF YOU WILL TAKE
PITY ON ME, I WILL
SERVE YOU FAITHFULLY!



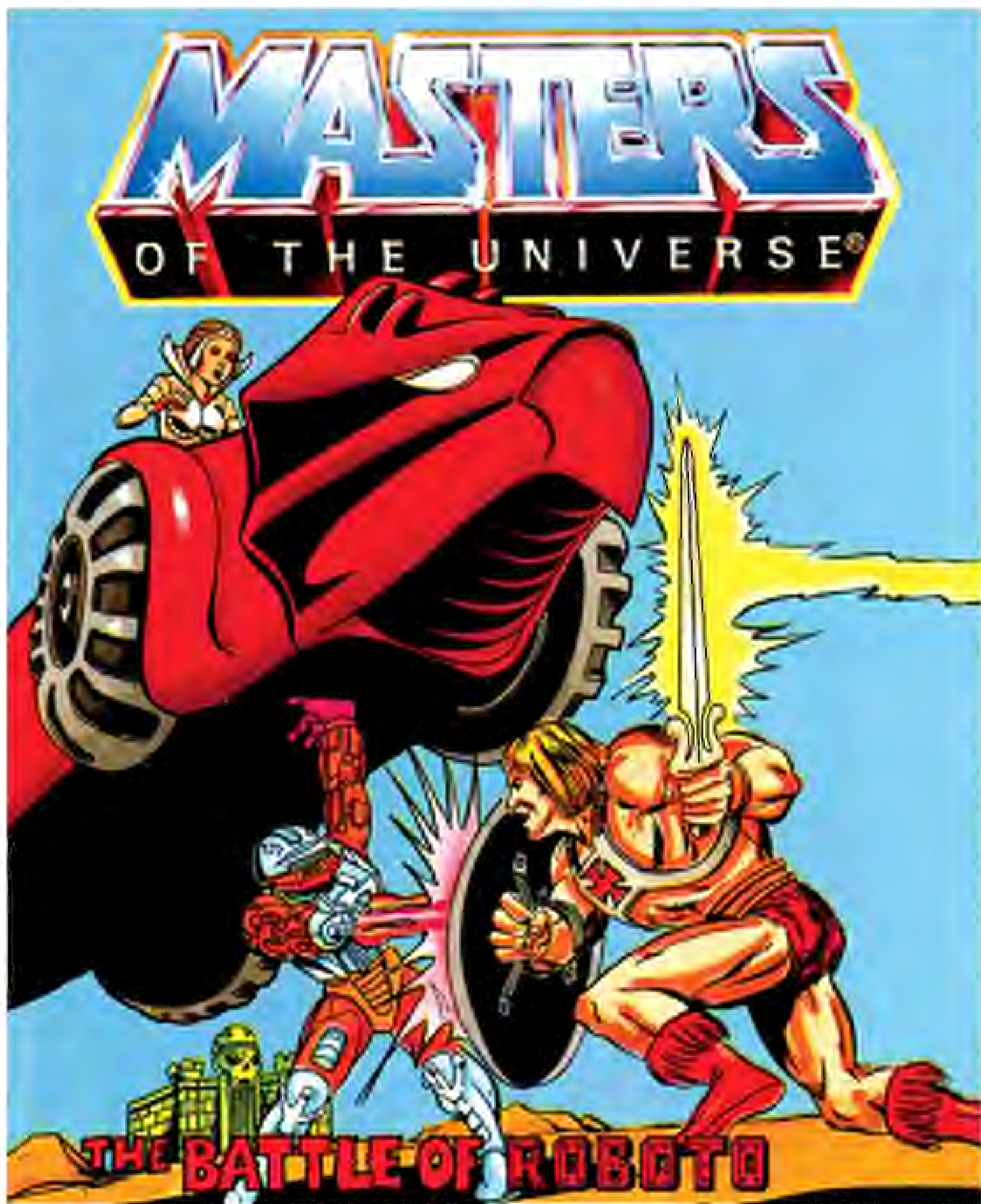
IN THE NAME
OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL,
I ACCEPT YOUR SERVICE,
BATTLE BONES! WHAT
SAY YOU, WARRIORS
OF ETERNIA?

WELCOME,
BATTLE
BONES!

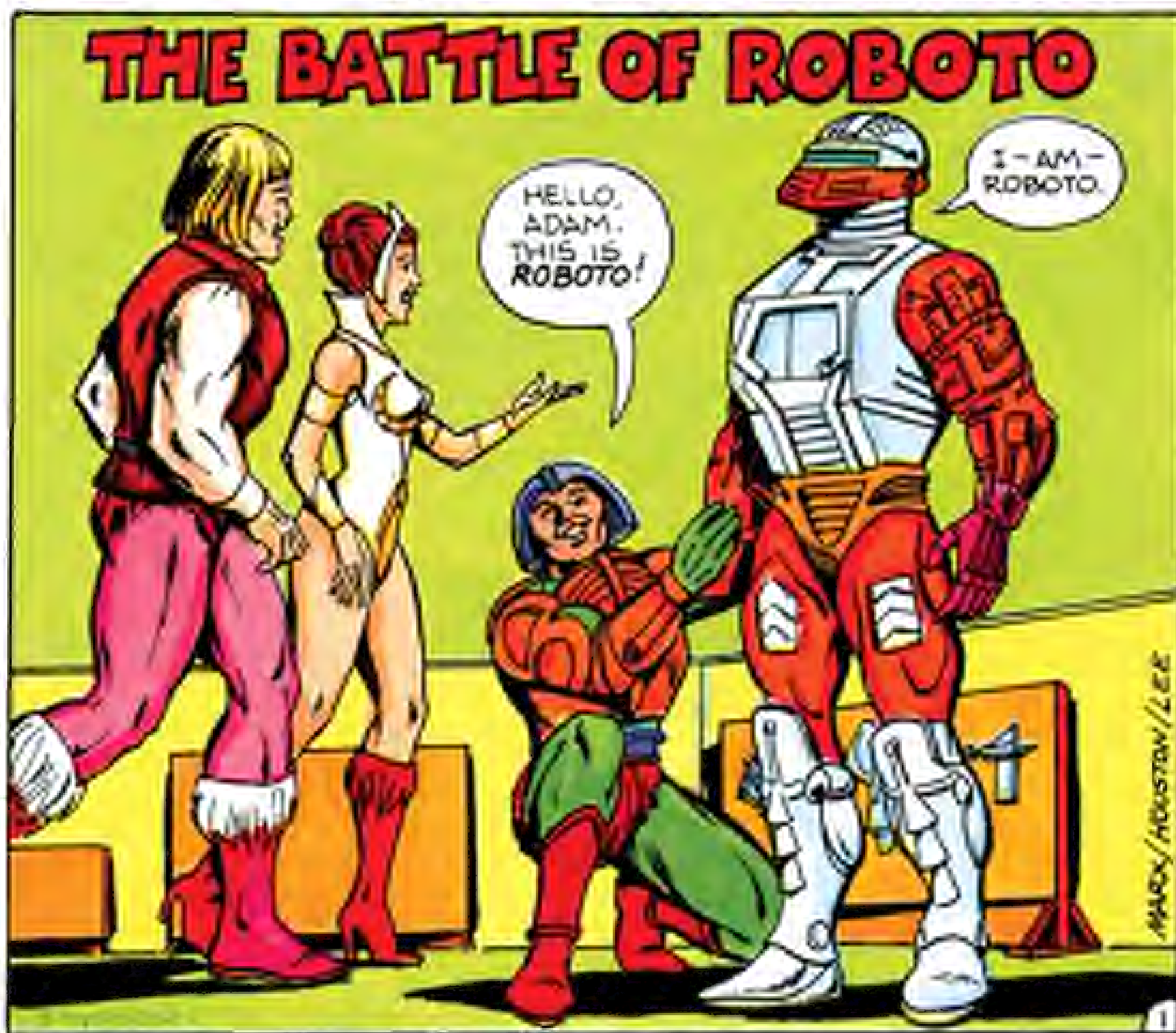


THE END

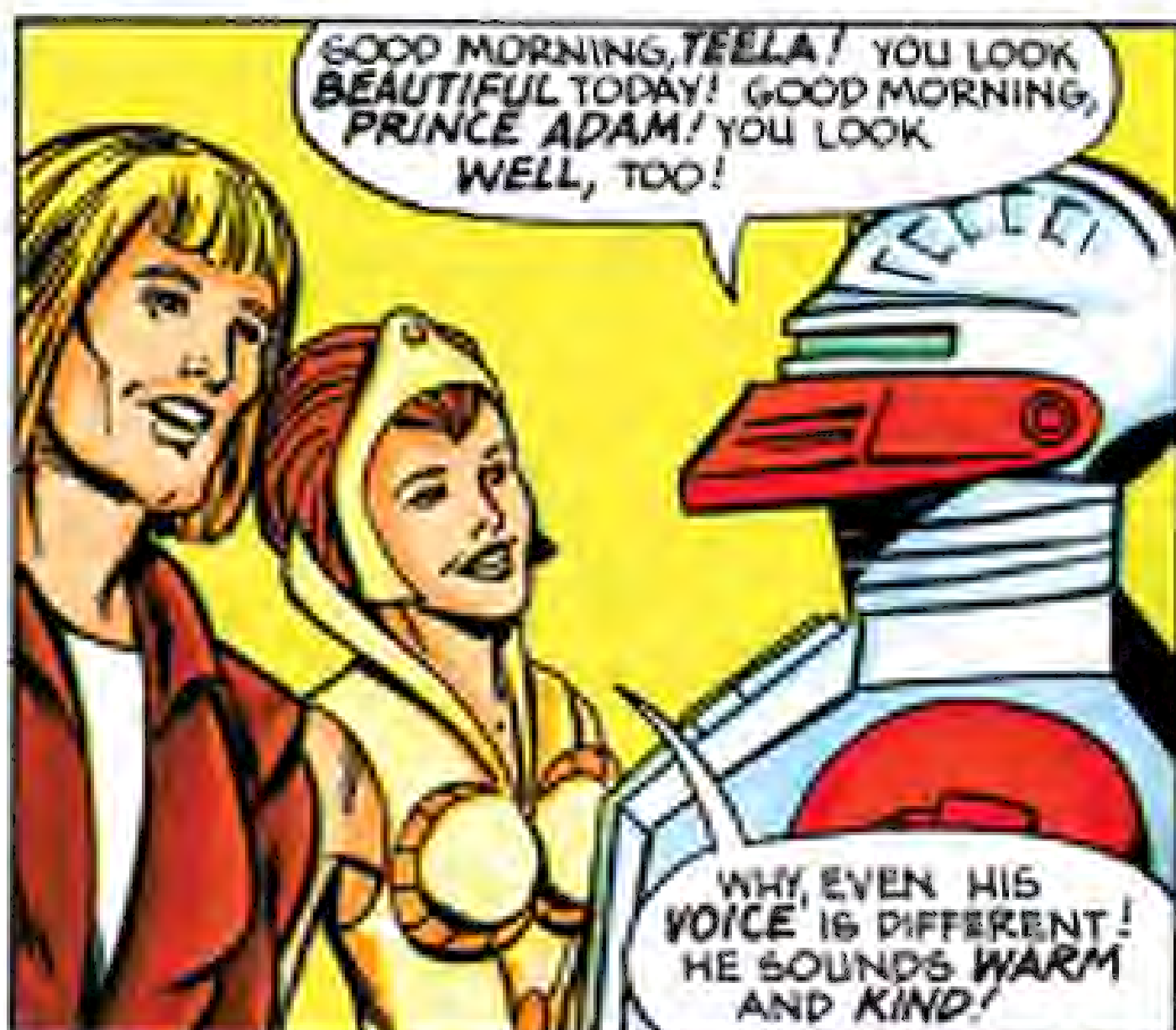




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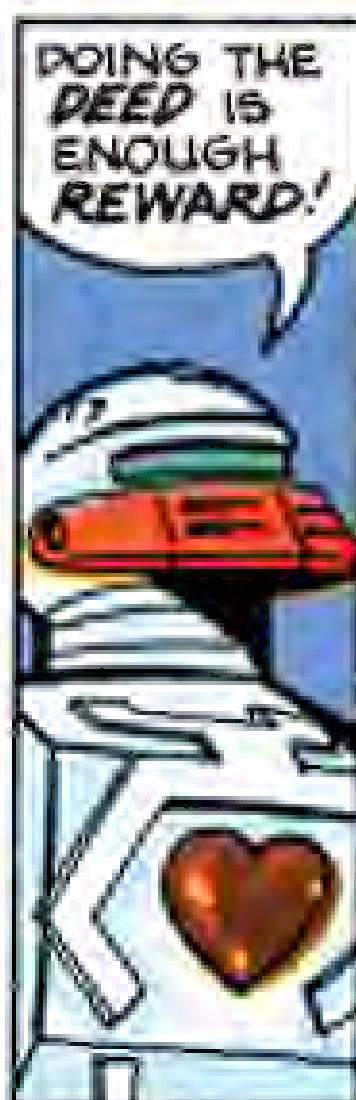




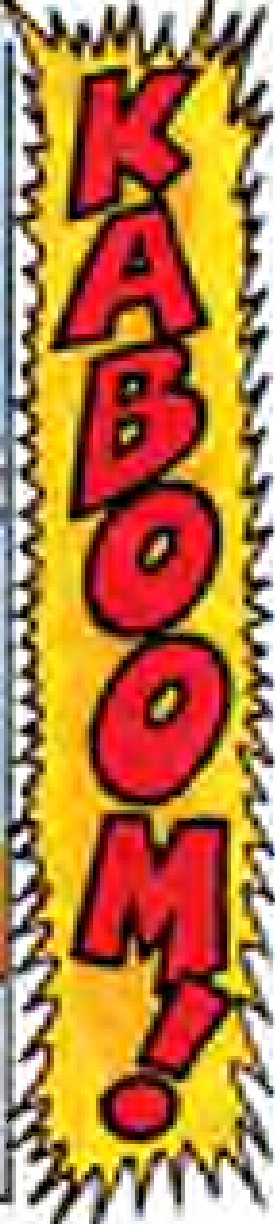




















WRONG
ON BOTH
COUNTS!

SWOT!



TEELA'S SHIELD
—ABOUT TO
GIVE WAY!



WHAM!



YOU'RE THE
ONLY ONE
STRONG ENOUGH
TO HOLD HIM,
HE-MAN...



...WHILE I PUT BACK
HIS HEART!

HURRY, MAN-
AT-ARMS!



FORGIVE ME! I
COULD NOT RESIST
SKELETOR'S EVIL
COMMANDS!

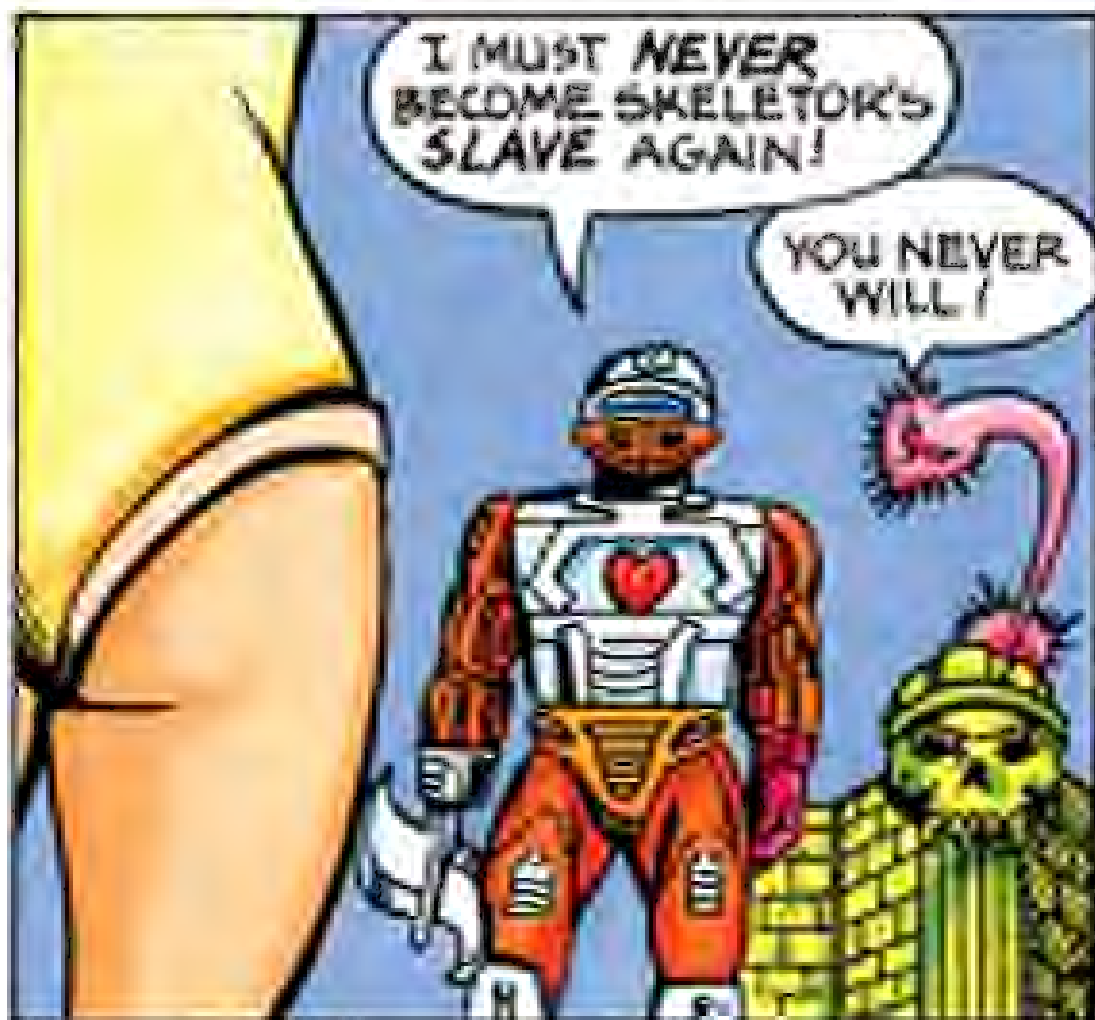


MY HEART IS MY GREATEST
STRENGTH, BUT ALSO MY
GREATEST WEAKNESS!



I MUST NEVER
BECOME SKELETOR'S
SLAVE AGAIN!

YOU NEVER
WILL!



I CAST A SPELL OF
PROTECTION UPON YOU!

NOTHING
EVIL CAN
PENETRATE
THIS
SPELL!



THE SORCERESS
WATCHES OVER HER
CHAMPIONS, ROBOTO!
FAREWELL!



FAREWELL,
MY FRIENDS!

END.



Your writing résumé covers a plethora of iconic TV titles, including *Babylon 5*, *The Twilight Zone* (1989), *X-Men: Evolution*, *Beast Wars*, *Transformers*, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (1988), and, among many, many others. When did you first discover your passion for writing, and how did it become your career?

I was a born storyteller from the earliest age. I became obsessed with comics and sequential visual storytelling as soon as I could read. Unfortunately, I followed a false path trying to be an artist for far too long, so I was into my twenties before I had the realization that I should be writing rather than drawing. I began to study scriptwriting, but my main passion was writing for comics.

My opportunity came when Roy Thomas moved to LA, where I was able to meet him and pitch him a *Conan* story I'd written. He bought that story and published it; this was my first professional sale. I went on to write *Red Sonja* stories and a *What If...* story about the Fantastic Four that like *What If...* story led to the break of writing my first animation script for a *Fantastic Four* series. I pursued comics and animation writing full time after that, branching later into live action and then video games.

You wrote a number of *Masters of the Universe* minicomics, such as *The Speech of Evil*, *Skelator's Dragon*, and *The Battle of Roboto*. How did you get involved with the minicomics?

Through my friend Lee Northing, Lee put the deal together and contracted with me to do writing, and with my husband at the time, Australian artist

Peter Ledger, to do some of the art. I had numerous comics-writing credits to my name by then, so it was a good fit.

Do you have any memorable or funny stories about working on them?

I remember what a challenge it was trying to fit stories into that tiny, limited format. When I mentor other writers on how to do video game writing, I tell them to think of game writing as a form of haiku that also applies to what we did with these minicomics. It was like trying to reduce a story to bits of haiku in sequential form.

Did you work on *She-Ra: Princess of Power* or *The New Adventures of He-Man* at all?

No, I didn't.

Lee Northing talked about the unpublished *He-Man* newspaper comic strip you wrote. What are your recollections of the strip? Your story borrows from Michael Halperin's story bible in that Evil-Lyn, Tri-Klops, and Beast Man are all former crew members of a ship that crash-landed on Eternia with Queen Marlena. Any idea where the story would have gone after the first few strips?

I'm embarrassed to admit it, but I have no recollection of that story at all, or where we might have gone with it. It was one of two sample newspaper stories I wrote for Mattel (the other was *Zorro*), and again, I have Lee Northing to thank for that. I'd grown up reading newspaper adventure strips and had a love



for them, but writing them is a format entirely of its own, with a specific set of rules and restrictions. Lee has an extensive background with newspaper strips, so he mentored me through the process. He taught me about making a story line work first for the daily strips, then for the Sunday version, where you need to do a recap of sorts and yet still move the story forward, but not so much that the people who might only read the dailies will lose the thread. It's tricky!

You've written story material for a number of video games. What kind of story might you concoct for a theoretical Masters of the Universe video game?

That's a broad question. I'm a game designer as well as a narrative designer. There are many, many different types of video games. The requirements for a console game are different from those for a mobile game; there are many types of mobile games, and so on. Given the nature of the property, it would lend itself well to some kind of PvP defend-your-base format. With the two sides battling over control of Eternia.

You wrote the episode "Buzz-Off's Pride" for the 2002 Mike Young Productions *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* cartoon. What was it like returning to the world of Masters of the Universe after almost twenty years?

I wrote that episode with my husband and writing partner, Randy Littlejohn. I hadn't written for any of the previous series, and this felt much the same as starting any new project, except that I had some familiarity with the characters. For this particular version, they wanted a different approach to the look and feel. They wanted it to be more action. The scripts were written in a format that was closer to live action than the typical animation script.

They'd already been struggling with making this story work when they handed it to us, and they nearly gave up on it. We had to work hard to come up with a script that carried it off, but we managed. ☼





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0007-5190

SPIKOR STRIKES!

BUT WHY DO WE HAVE TO GO TO THIS VILLAGE OF... OF...

THE VILLAGE OF NORDLING! BECAUSE MY FATHER WANTS ME TO PRESENT THE MAYOR OF NORDLING WITH A CEREMONIAL SCROLL OF GREETING. IT'S AN ANCIENT TRADITION THAT...

OH NO!

W-WHAT IS IT?

I FORGOT THE SCROLL! I WASN'T PAYING ATTENTION WHEN FATHER GAVE ME THE INSTRUCTIONS AND NOW HE'LL BE FURIOUS WITH ME!



IN THE PALACE, KING RANDOR FINDS THE SCROLL.



ADAM IS A GOOD BOY, IF ONLY HE WOULD PAY MORE ATTENTION!

SY-KLONE!



HOW MAY I SERVE YOUR MAJESTY?



PLEASE TAKE THIS TO MY SON! HE HAS GONE TO THE VILLAGE OF NORDLING!

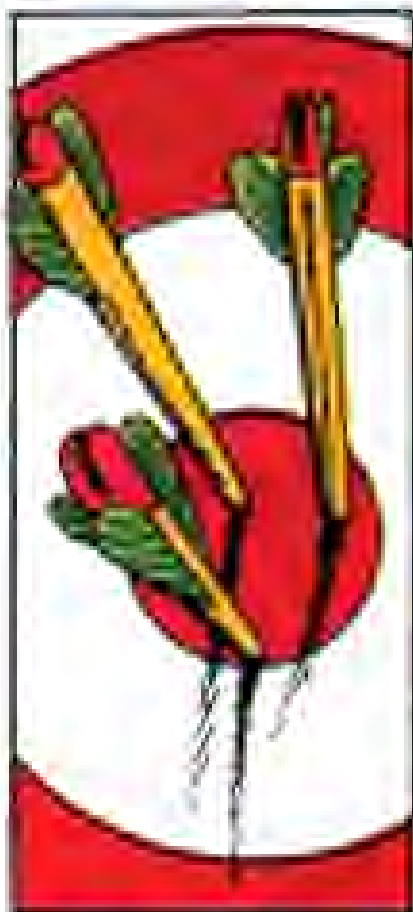


IT IS MY PLEASURE!



SY-KLONE SPEEDS ON HIS WAY, USING HIS RADAR TO CHART A SAFE COURSE THROUGH THE SKY!







MEANWHILE, HE-MAN APPROACHES THE VILLAGE OF NORDLING.







BACK,
VILLAIN!



HOLD, HE-MAN! I
SENT SPIKOR AS A
DIVERSION SO I
COULD SET A
TRAP FOR YOU!



TEELA
IS MY
BAIT!

YOU HAVE A
CHOICE, HE-MAN--

STOP SPIKOR'S
RAMPAGE OR
ATTEMPT TO
RESCUE THE
WARRIOR-
WOMAN!



ONLY YOU
CAN STOP
SPIKOR, BUT
I CAN SAVE
TEELA!

YOU'RE
RIGHT,
SY-KLONE,
GO QUICKLY!



I WILL
NOT
FAIL!







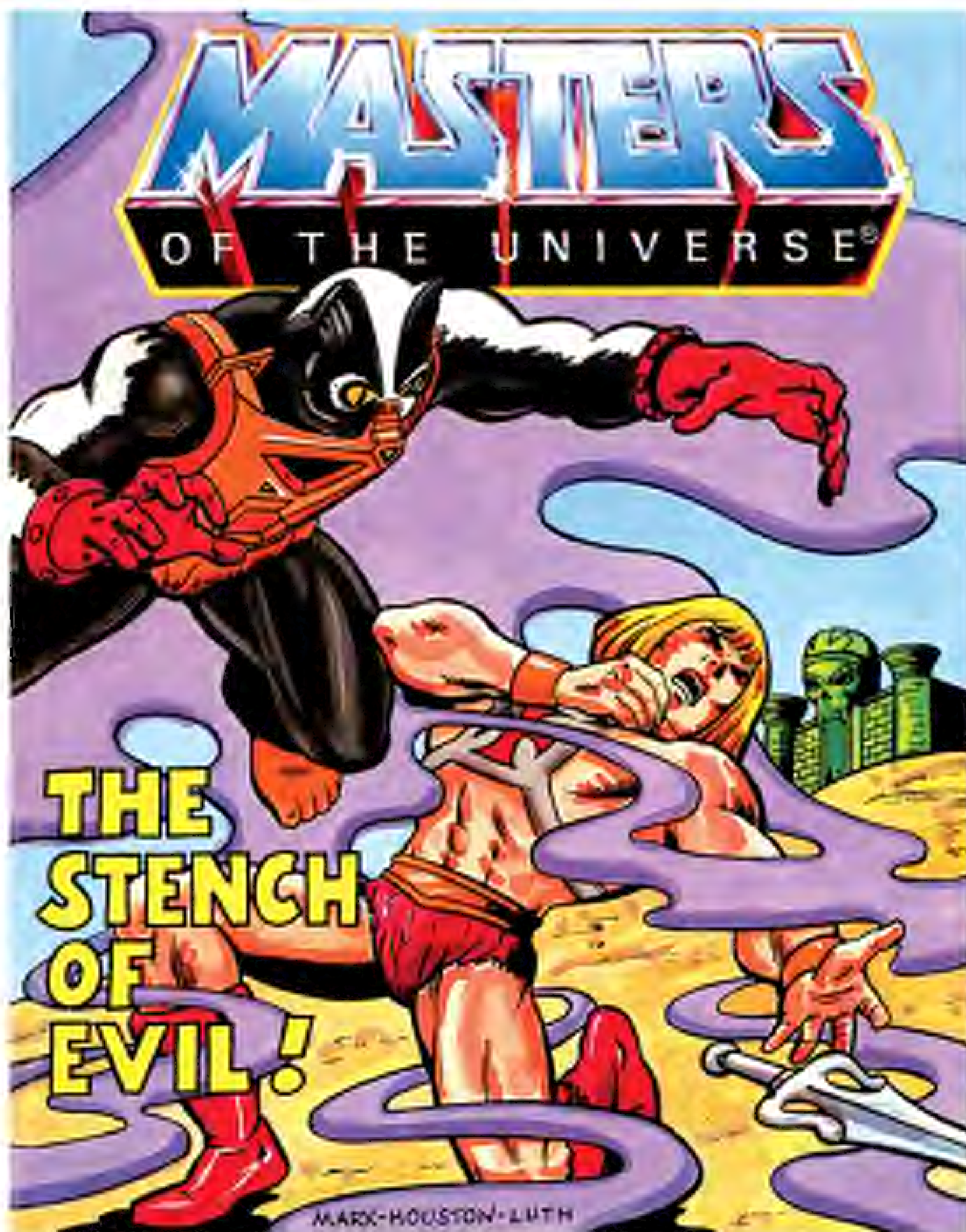












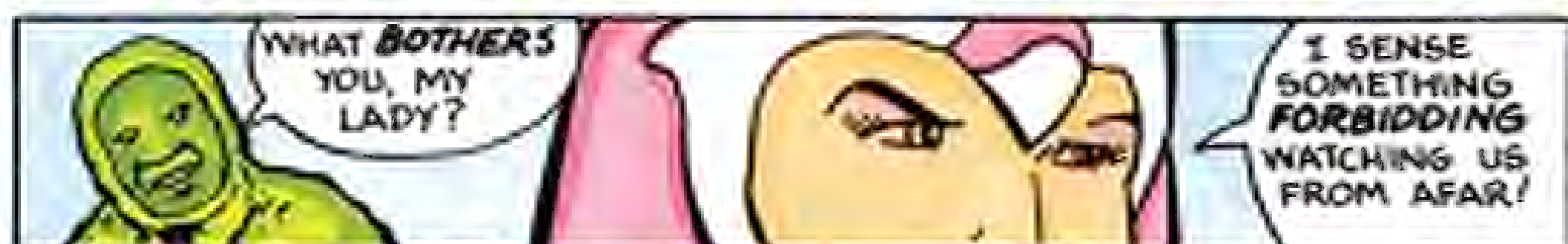
THE SORCERESS, IN THE FORM OF A FALCON, SOARS OVER THE FORESTS OF ETERNIA!



THE STENCH OF EVIL!









YES! YES!
I REVEL
IN ALL THAT
IS **FOUL!**

SOON THE TWO VILLAINS REACH THE FOREST AND STINKOR FILLS THE AIR WITH A FOUL ODOR!

SOON THE TWO VILLAINS REACH THE FOREST AND STINKOR FILLS THE AIR WITH A FOUL ODOR!

UNABLE TO BEAR THE EVIL
SMELL, THE ANIMALS FLEE!

STINKOR'S ODOR SPREADS, POLLUTING THE SKIES AND DRIVING AWAY THE BIRDS!



LOOK, SKELETOR!

SEE HOW EVERYTHING RUNS FROM ME!



ALL THE CREATURES OF THE FOREST FLEE! BUT WHY? THERE IS NO FIRE! WHO COULD DRIVE THEM TO THIS?



EVEN THE ANTS AND BEETLES AND INSECTS ARE LEAVING!



BUT MY FOREST CAN-
NOT LIVE WITHOUT
ITS ANIMAL FRIENDS,
BOTH LARGE
AND SMALL!



I WILL SEARCH THE
FOREST UNTIL I FIND
WHAT TERRIBLE
THING HAS CAUSED
THIS!



STINKOR AND SKELETOR COME TO A VILLAGE AT THE EDGE OF THE FOREST!



WHAT HAPPY FOOLS THEY ARE. DRIVE THEM FROM THEIR HOMES!

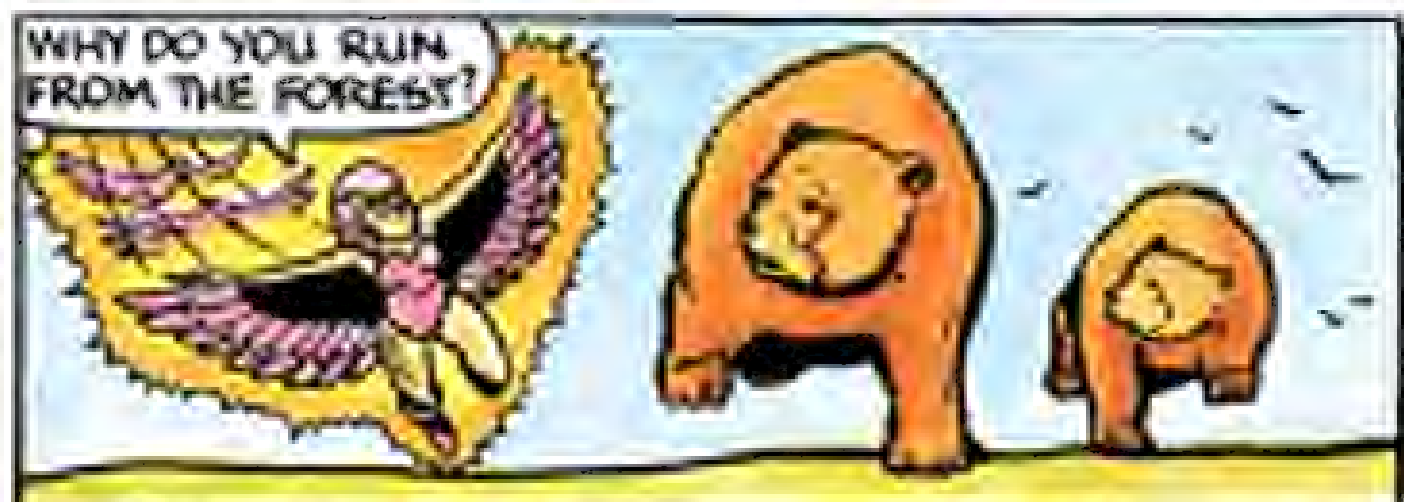
THAT SMELL -- IT'S WORSE THAN A HUNDRED SKUNKS!



RUN, BEFORE IT POISONS US WITH ITS HORRIBLE STENCH!



WHY DO YOU RUN FROM THE FOREST?



SKELETOR HAS COME AND BROUGHT WITH HIM A BEING WHO SPREADS AN ODOR THROUGHOUT THE FOREST THAT IS SO TERRIBLE, WE CANNOT REMAIN AND BREATHE IT!



THEN I MUST SUMMON HELP AT ONCE!



AT THAT MOMENT, IN THE ROYAL PALACE...

A GENUINE WILD WOLF, PRINCE ADAM! I ONLY WANT A FEW COINS FOR HIM! HE'LL MAKE A WONDERFUL PET!



IT IS ONE THING TO HAVE A DOMESTIC ANIMAL AS A PET. BUT TO TAKE A WILD CREATURE FROM ITS NATURAL HOME IS WRONG!



B-BUT, YOUR HIGHNESS, I WILL GIVE HIM TO YOU! FREE!



I COMMAND YOU TO FREE HIM IMMEDIATELY!



WOOF! WOOF!



ADAM, YOU'RE SO WISE!



SKELETOR RAVAGES THE FOREST WITH A STENCH SO FOUL IT CANNOT BE ENDURED! SUMMON HE-MAN AND ALL THE WARRIORS OF ETERNIA!



EXCUSE ME! I MUST GO!





THE LONG LEGS OF **BATTLE BONES** QUICKLY CARRY THE HEROES TOWARD THE FOREST!







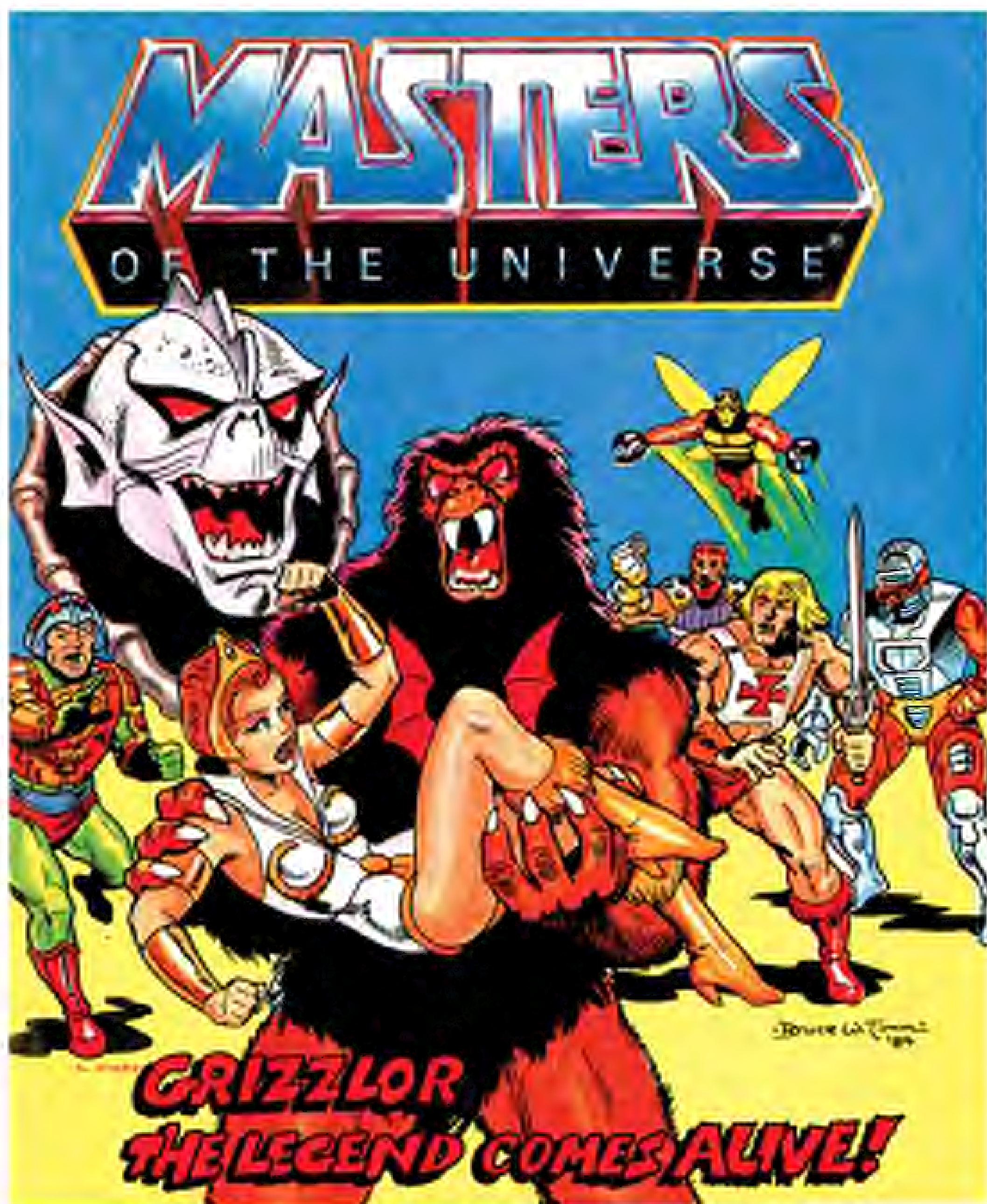






THE
END.





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0007-5380

NIGHTFALL...AND THE EERIE SHROUD OF DARKNESS
CLOAKS *ETERNIA* IN GLOOM. IT IS AN HOUR
MOST MACABRE--FOR EVIL LURKS IN EVERY
SHADOW AND TERROR WALKS THE NIGHT.
A FLICKERING FIRE LIGHTS THE HEROIC
WARRIORS' ENCAMPMENT AND THEY LISTEN AS
BUZZ-OFF TELLS A TALE MOST GRIM...

"THE CREATURE,
KNOWN AS GRIZZLOR
STALKED HIS PREY
BY MOONLIGHT..."

"WITH A STING GUN,
HE WOULD STUN HIS
VICTIMS..."

"...AND THEN *ATTACK*
THEM WITH HIS
WICKED CLAWS!"



GRIZZLOR

**THE LEGEND
COMES ALIVE!**



I'VE HEARD THAT GRIZZLOR STILL WALKS THE PLANET, BUT NO ONE'S EVER SEEN HIM...

...OR LIVED TO TELL ABOUT IT!



HOW GRUESOME!



FEAR NOT, FAIR TEELA! BUZZ-OFF TELLS A DIFFERENT TALE OF TERROR ON EACH AND EVERY CUTTING! THE BEAST IS **LEGEND** -- NOTHING MORE!



BREAKING CAMP AT SUNRISE, THE HEROIC WARRIORS SET OUT FOR THE **PALACE OF POWER**--BUZZ-OFF'S GRISLY YARN ALL BUT FORGOTTEN!



TO REACH HOME AGAIN WILL BE A **PLEASURE**...

CAREFUL, TEELA-- WATCH YOUR STEP!



HMM... WHAT'S THIS I SEE BELOW!



BETTER TAKE A CLOSER LOOK!











BUT TEELA'S GRIM
DISCOVERY HAS COME
TOO LATE...

HEADS UP,
HEROES! TROUBLE
AT TWO O'CLOCK!

EGAD... THE
LEGEND'S TRUE!
IT'S GRIZZLOR
IN THE FLESH!

GRRARR!



OUT OF MY
WAY, OAFS! IT IS
TEELA I AM AFTER!



NOT A
CHANCE!



GRIZZLOR
DESTROY
YOU!!!

SLAM!





WARRIOR
GODDESS!...

CAN'T... BREAK
FREE...

HORDAK
WILL BE MOST
PLEASED TO
SEE YOU!



HE'S GOT
TEELA!



BUT WITH HIS GIANT
STRIDE, GRIZZLOR SOON
OUTDISTANCES HIS
PURSUERS AND THEY
CAN DO LITTLE MORE
THAN FOLLOW THE
TRAIL OF DESTRUCTION
HE HAS LEFT BEHIND.



FISTO, QUICKLY! GRAB HER
STAFF AND SHIELD AND
COME ON! WE'VE GOTTA
STOP HIM!

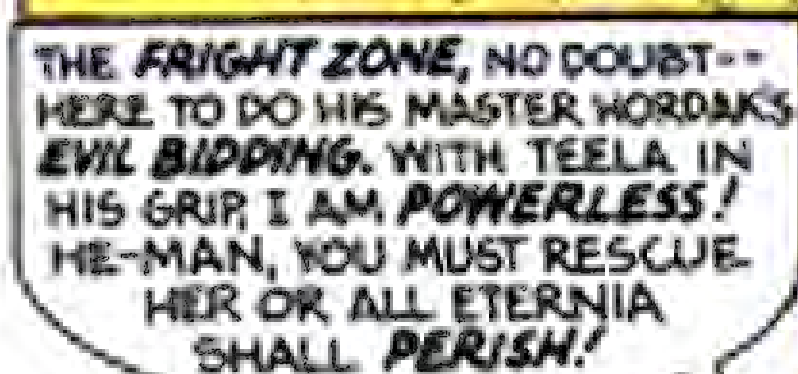


BLASTED!
GRIZZLOR
OUTMATCHES
US IN EVERY
WAY!

COMRADE, SHOW NOT
YOUR DESPAIR. WE
WILL TRACK THE
BEAST TO THE
ENDS OF ETERNIA
IF NEED BE!

AND I
SHALL GO AT
ONCE AND
SUMMON HE-MAN!
FOR THE LOVE
OF TEELA!
EVIL SHALL
NOT PREVAIL!





WE FOLLOWED GRIZZLOR'S
TRACKS TO THIS PORTAL!
SEEMS IT LEADS TO
ANOTHER WORLD, BUT
WE CAN'T GET
THROUGH!

THEN WE'LL
JUST HAVE
TOO...

...BREAK
THROUGH!

ZOOM!

THAR
SHE
BLOWS!

WHAT? HO!
HE-MAN...

COME ON,
YOU OVERGROWN
HAIRY APE!
SHOW ME YOUR
STUFF!

GLAD TO
OBLIGE,
WEAKLING!



GRIZZLOR SEES HIS REFLECTION IN TEELA'S SHIELD AS IT FLASHES BY...





BUT, WISELY REALIZING THAT ALONE HE IS NO MATCH FOR HE-MAN'S **SUPER-STRENGTH**, HORDAK HAS FLED, WRAPPED IN A **CLOAK OF DARKNESS**!



INDEED, ROBOTO! BUT WE FOILED HIS PLANS AND **PRESERVED ETERNIA** FROM HARM AS WELL!

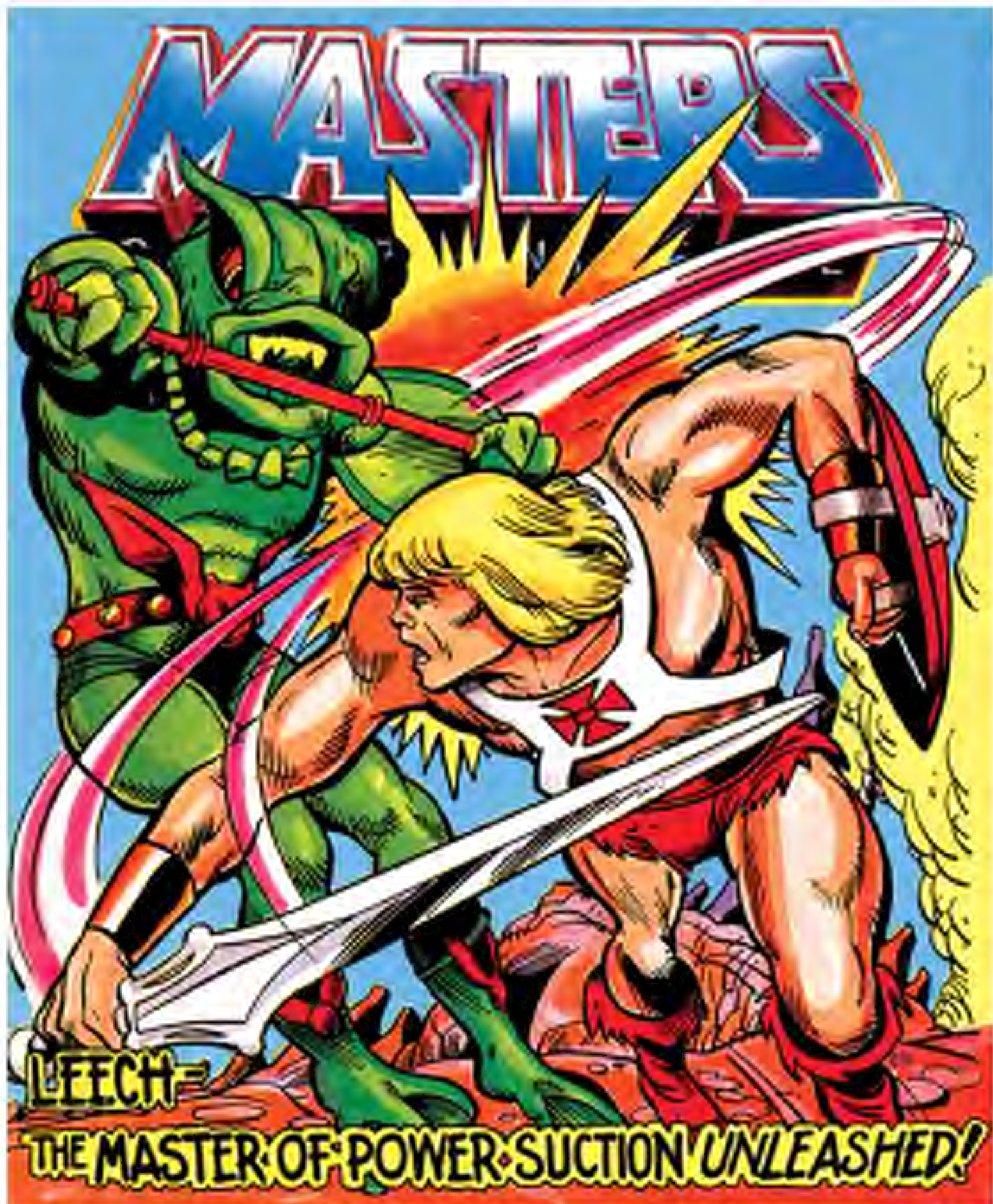


AND SO, THE HEROES OF ETERNIA, HAVE SAVED THE DAY **ONCE MORE**! BUT AS ALWAYS, THERE IS A **LESSON** TO BE LEARNED ... ONE THAT, FOR **BUZZ-OFF**, WILL NOT BE SOON FORGOTTEN...

WHEN! I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER HAD A CLOSER CALL! FROM NOW ON, WHEN BUZZ-OFF GIVES A WORD OF WARNING, I'LL BE SURE TO LISTEN!



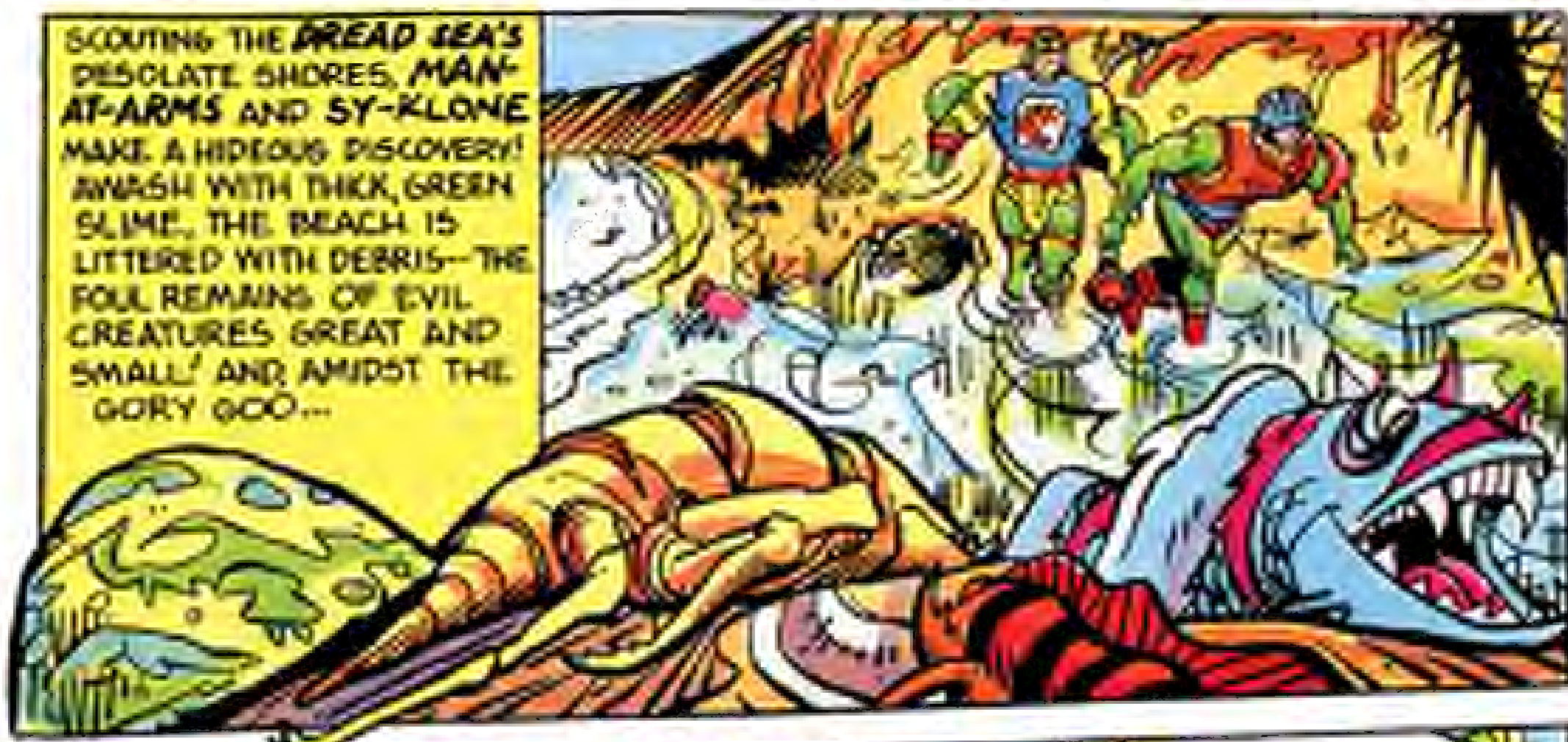




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0007-5550

SCOUTING THE DREAD SEA'S
DESOLATE SHORES, MAN-
AT-ARMS AND SY-KLONE
MAKE A HIDEOUS DISCOVERY!
AWASH WITH THICK, GREEN
SLIME, THE BEACH IS
LITTERED WITH DEBRIS--THE
FOUL REMAINS OF EVIL
CREATURES GREAT AND
SMALL! AND, AMIDST THE
GORY GOO...



LO AND
BEHOLD!
WHAT
HAVE WE
HERE?



WHY...
IT'S MER-MAN!
AND HE LOOKS
AS IF HE'S SEEN
A GHOST!



M-M-
MONSTER...
CANNOT BE...
NOOOOO!!!



GREAT THUNDER!
THE VILE FELLOW'S
COME
UNSTRUNG!



SUDDENLY, THE SEA CHURNS VIOLENTLY AND A GHASTLY SEA BEAST LOOMS LARGE BEFORE MAN-AT-ARMS!



AND BY ETERNIA...
I DON'T
BLAME
HIM!

CURSED
CHAMPION OF
GOOD! OUTTA
MY WAY OR I'LL
MAKE A MEAL
OF YOU!

LEEEEECH!



ARRRGHHH!
THE BEAST
DRAINS MY
FIGHTING
STRENGTH...
CAN'T BREAK
FREE!

BLUSTERING
BLOWFISH! LOOKS
LIKE MAN-AT-ARM
STEW'S NEXT ON
THAT SLIMY SEA-
PIG'S MENU! GOTTA
STOP HIM!



TRY A
TASTE OF KNUCKLE
SANDWICH, BLUBBERGUT!

WHAAM!



RETURNING TO KING RANDOR'S PALACE WITH MER-MAN IN TOW, SY-KLONE AND MAN-AT-ARMS RECOUNT THEIR GRIM ORDEAL!





FURIOUS THAT LEECH HAS RETREATED, A SCOWLING HORDAK BERATES THE BEAST AND ORDERS HIM TO RETURN AND TAKE **REVENGE** ON HIS ATTACKER!



BUT... BUT...

GORMLESS, COWERING TWIT! I SEND YOU TO CATCH A WEAK FISH...

...AND, AT THE FIRST SIGN OF STRUGGLE, YOU TURN TAIL AND **RUN!**



BUT...



BE GONE! AND DARE NOT SHOW YOUR FACE AGAIN UNTIL MER-MAN IS IN YOUR POWER!

CERTAIN ETERNIA'S SURVIVAL DEPENDS ON PICKING OFF THE EVIL HORDE ONE BY ONE. HE-MAN MASTERMINDS A CLEVER PLOT TO LURE LEECH TO HIS DOOM. AND QUICKLY, THE HEROIC WARRIORS SPRING INTO ACTION!



NOW!!!



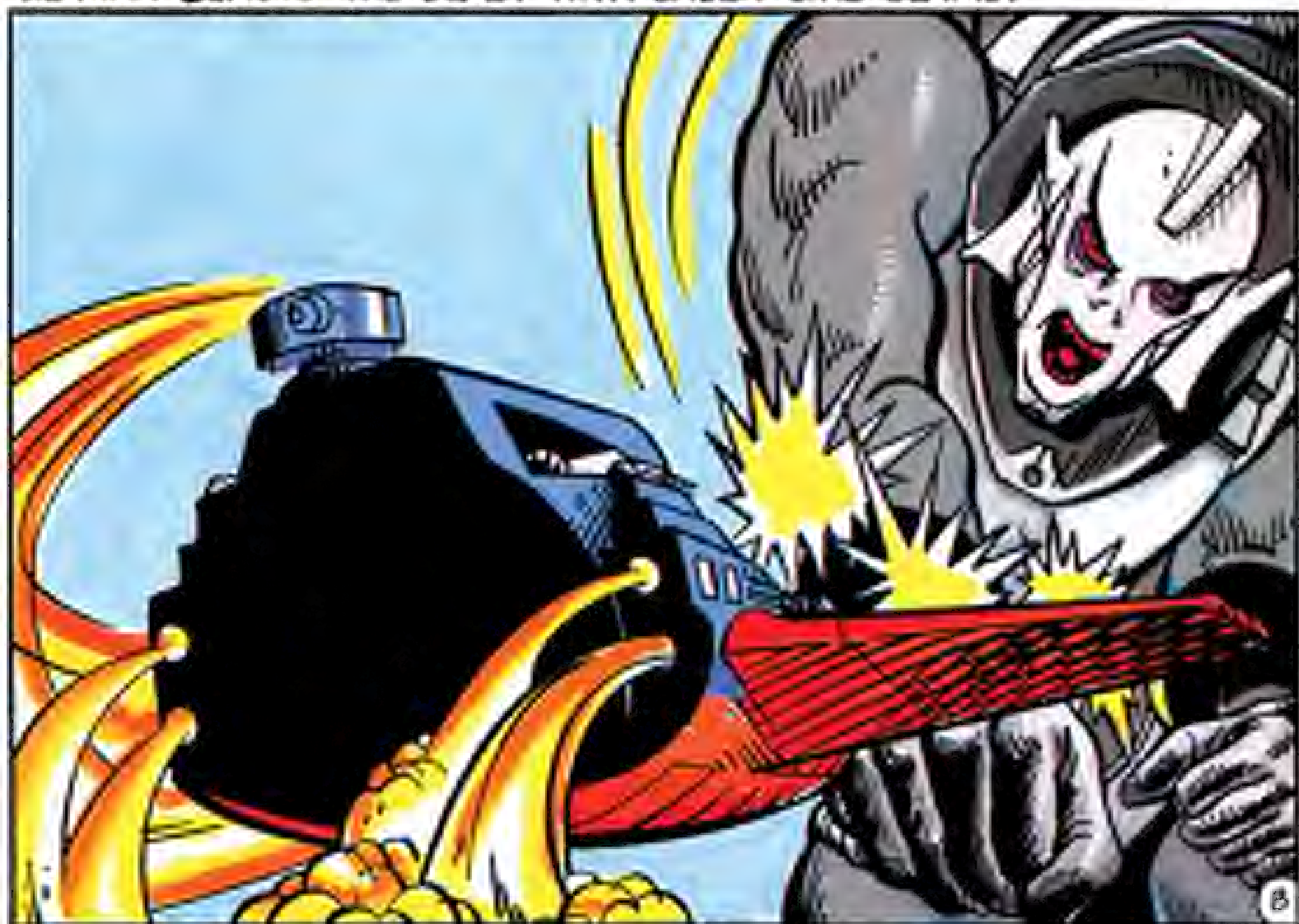


BUT HIGH
ATOP THE
CLIFFS OF
DREAD, A
FORCE MORE
EVIL THAN
A THOUSAND
LEECHES
LURKS--
WATCHING
AND
WAITING...

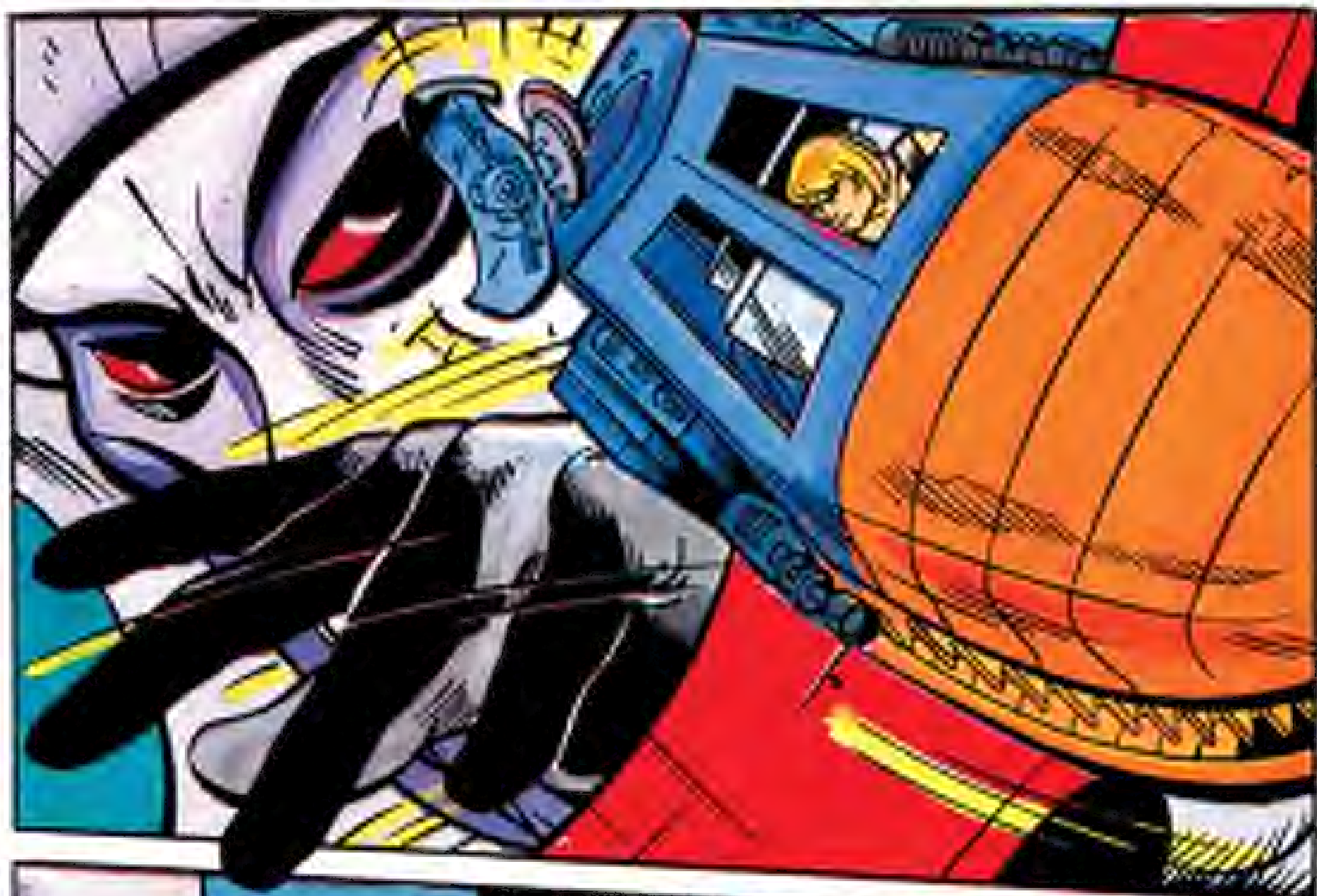




SWELLED TO MORE THAN TWICE HIS NORMAL SIZE, THE GARGANTUAN HORDAK FLAILS WILDLY AT HE-MAN! CIRCLING IN THE TALON FIGHTER, HE-MAN **BLASTS** THE BEAST WITH LASER-LIKE BEAMS!







RIGHT NOW, I HAVE
ANOTHER SCORE TO SETTLE!



PROPELLING THE LAND-SHARK
FORWARD, SKELETOR MAKES A
MOVE ON LEECH, WRENCHING
MERMAN FROM HIS GRASP!
THE EVIL OCEAN WARLORD
GOES FLYING!



LEECH! LOOSE
MY LACKY FROM
YOUR LIPS OR
LOOK TO YOUR
LIFE!



SLUCKK

SKELETOR
WATCHES IN
HORROR AS
THE SLIMY
CREATURE
SUCKS THE
VEHICLE'S
POWER
DRY!



CURSES!
THAT
SLITHERING
SLIME-BALL
SUCKS THE
LAND-SHARK'S
POWER DRY! I
AM LNDONE!



AND AS SKELETOR MAKES HIS HASTY GETAWAY, HE-MAN SENSES HE TOO MAY BE OUT-MATCHED BY HIS OPPONENT! IT'S DO OR DIE-- AND THE VALIANT WARRIOR PUTS THE TALON FIGHTER INTO A KAMIKAZE DIVE... STRAIGHT FOR MORDAK!



HEROIC FOOL! YOU
HAVE SEALED YOUR
FATE-- AND GLADLY
WILL I SEND YOU
TO YOUR OWN
DESTRUCTION!

--BUT LO! THE BEASTLY BRUTE DOES SPEAK TOO
SOON, FOR HE-MAN STRIKES THE BATTLE'S FINAL
BLOW-- SENDING THE MONSTER REELING FROM
ETERNIA INTO THE GREAT BEYOND!

BA-BOOM!

HORDAK
GOES
SPINNING
THROUGH
THE
PORTAL!

OH YOU SHALL LIVE TO
RUE THIS DAY, HE-MAN!
FOR MARK MY WORDS, WHEN I
RETURN ETERNIA WILL FALL AND
I SHALL HAVE MY POUND OF FLESH!

LOOK!
HORDAK HAS
DISAPPEARED!

AND LEECH,
TOO, IS
GONE!

AND THOUGH THE TALON
FIGHTER LOOKS WORSE
FOR WEAR, HE-MAN
APPEARS TO BE
ALL RIGHT!

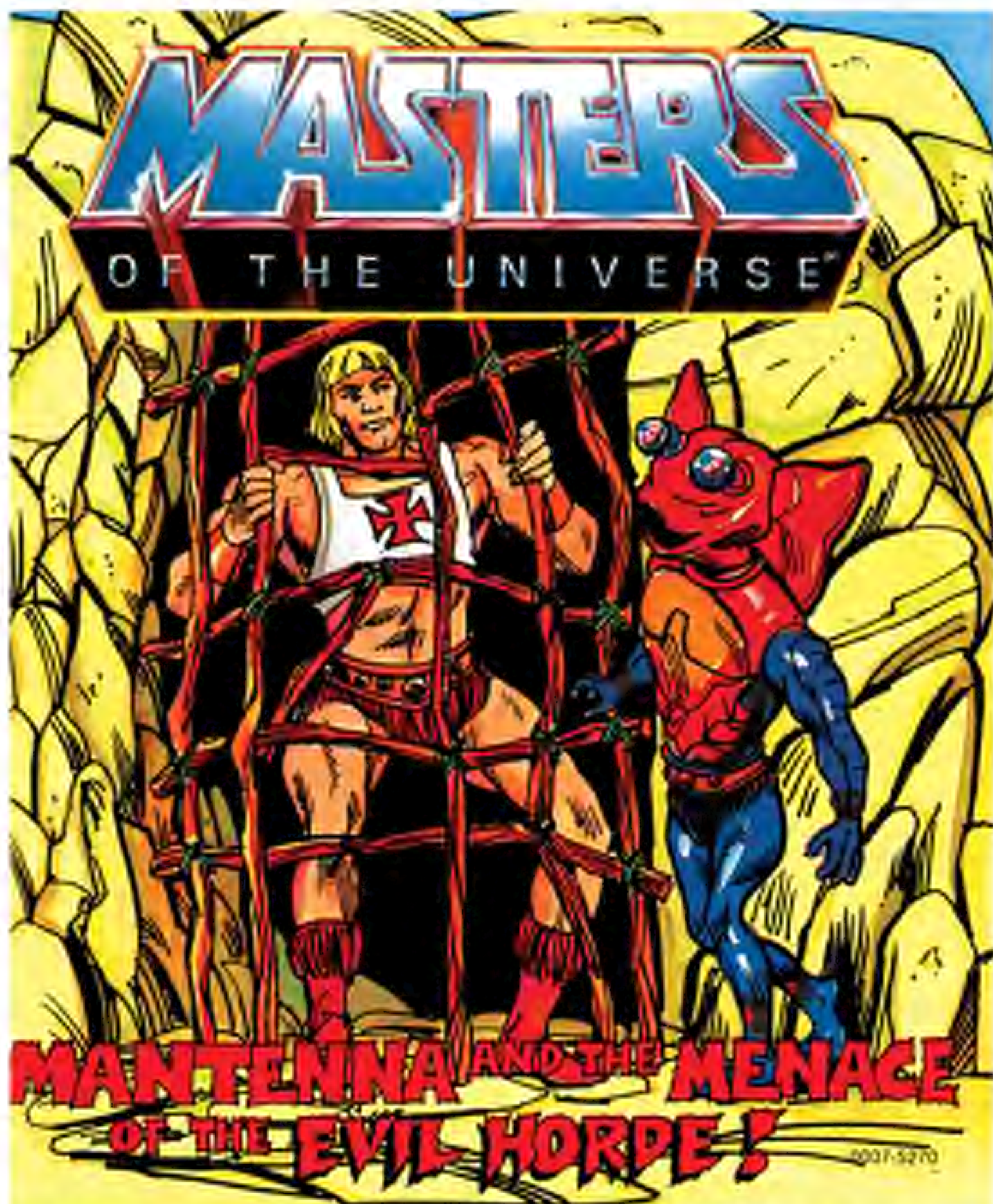
INDEED I
AM— THOUGH
I MUST ADMIT
I'VE NEVER HAD
A CLOSER
CALL!

I CANNOT ANSWER THAT, MY FRIEND,
BUT I CAN TELL YOU THIS— WE WILL
STAND FAST AND BATTLE HARD,
FEARING **NOTHING!** FOR IN
THE LONG RUN, EVIL IS
ITS OWN UNDOING AND
DESTRUCTION ITS OWN
REWARD!

BUT WHAT IF HORDAK
RETURNS WITH ALL
HIS RENEGADES? WHAT
HOPE HAVE WE AGAINST
THE EVIL HORDE?

the
end





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SUDDENLY, THE PALACE IS ROCKED BY VIOLENT TREMORS, SCATTERING THE HEROIC WARRIORS ABOUT THE THRONE ROOM, AND THROWING KING RANDOR TO THE FLOOR!

RUMMMMMBBLE!

CLOSE AT HAND?! IT WOULD SEEM THE FOES SIT RIGHT ON TOP OF US!

AND PERHAPS NO TRUER WORDS WERE EVER SPOKEN...



WHAT IN ETERNIA...?! I DON'T BELIEVE MY EYES!

UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT-- WILL ATTEMPT TO GET A READING...



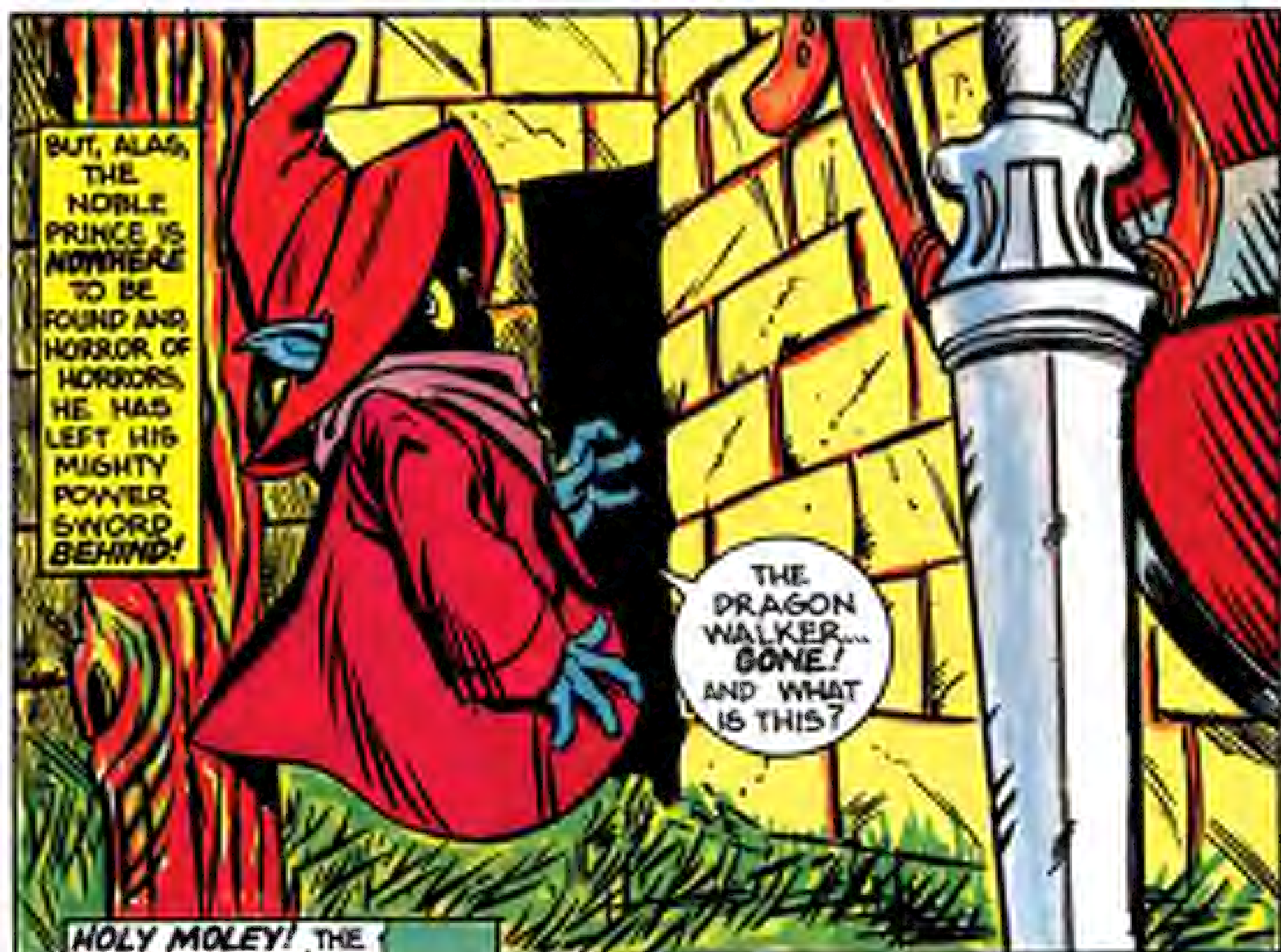
WELL C'MON, METAL HEAD, C'MON! WHAT IS IT?

...BUT AS SWIFTLY AS THE STRANGE HOVERCRAFT APPEARED, IT IS MYSTERIOUSLY GONE!



TOO LITTLE TIME TO TELL! YET ALL MY SENSORS TELL ME... DANGER! DANGER!

MUST FIND PRINCE ADAM, ON THE DOUBLE! NEED HE-MAN'S HELP! THERE COULD BE TROUBLE!





CURSED VINES! THEY BRING THE DRAGON WALKER TO A **STAND-STILL!** AND THOUGH I KNOW NOT WHAT IT IS THAT DRAWS ME HERE, I MUST GO ON FOOT!

LEAVING THE DRAGON WALKER BEHIND, PRINCE ADAM CONTINUES ON FOOT! HOLDING HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS, THE BOY TRIES TO SHAKE HIMSELF OF THE STRANGE SPELL THAT CONTROLS HIM!

BUT HOLD, WHAT HAVE I DONE? WITHOUT THE SWORD OF POWER, I AM NO MATCH AGAINST THE HAND OF EVIL--YET THIS RINGING IN MY EARS, THESE HOLLOW VOICES DRIVE ME FORWARD AGAINST MY VERY WILL!

SUDDENLY...

HOLY THUNDER! THAT MAMMOTH MASTICATOR MEANS TO MAKE A MEAL O' ME! I AM **UNDONE!**

THE BEASTLY
CREATURE
SWALLOWS
PRINCE ADAM
WHOLE...



...AND HE PLUMMETS
THROUGH THIS
STRANGE PORTAL
TO THE FRIGHT
ZONE'S INTERIOR!



MY, MY... WHAT HAVE
WE HERE? A MOST
DISTINGUISHED
GUEST-- PRINCE
ADAM! SO NICE OF
YOU TO DROP IN
FOR A VISIT!
HA HA HA HA
HAAAAAAA!

A
TENDER
MORSEL IF
I'VE EVER SEEN
ONE! **HORDAK**--
LET ME HAVE
'IM!

YOU'LL
HAVE TO
FIGHT
ME FOR
'IM FIRST,
YA HAIRY
PLEASAB!





THE FORCE OF FISTO'S BLOW SENDS GRIZZLOR REELING! MEANWHILE, LEECH ADVANCES ON THE PALACE AND LOCKS HIS LIPS ON ITS STURDY PORTICO, SUCKING WITH ALL HIS MIGHT!

SLURP AND GUZZLE,
SWIG AND SWILL/
R-R-RIP THIS DOOR
FROM ITS HINGES
I WILL!





MEAN-
WHILE,
IN THE
HEAT OF
BATTLE, A
THOUGHT
OCCURS
TO MAN-
AT-ARMS...

MAN-E-FACES! RAM MAN! WHEN I HIT HORDAK FROM THE FRONT, YOU BLAST HIM FROM BEHIND! IF WE CAN PUT THE KIBOSH ON THEIR LEADER, I THINK WE'LL SEND THESE MAD DOGS *RUNNING!*

IT'S WORTH A TRY! RAM MAN, C'MON!

10

BUT MANTENNA, WITH HIS POWERFUL SENSORS, HAS DISCOVERED HIS FOES' BATTLE PLAN...



A BIT OF MY BLUSTERIN' BREEZE OUGHTA HOLD YOU, BEETLE BRAIN!



YEEARGH!









HORDAK'S
CRINGING
LACKEYS
FLEE...

I SEE THAT
I WILL HAVE
TO DEAL WITH
YOU MYSELF,
HE-MAN!

OF YOUR VILE TREACHERY,
I HAVE HAD ENOUGH! THE
WRATH OF HE-MAN HAS
BEEN RAISED AND NOW YOU
SHALL FEEL THE FURY
OF THE SWORD OF
POWER!



AND WITH LIGHTNING
SPEED, THE EVIL
MENACE TO ETERNIA
IS VANQUISHED,
BLASTED BACK TO THE
FRIGHT ZONE...
TRAPPED IN
HIS OWN HOLDING
CELL...



ALL HAIL
GREAT
HE-MAN,
THE HERO
OF
ETERNIA!

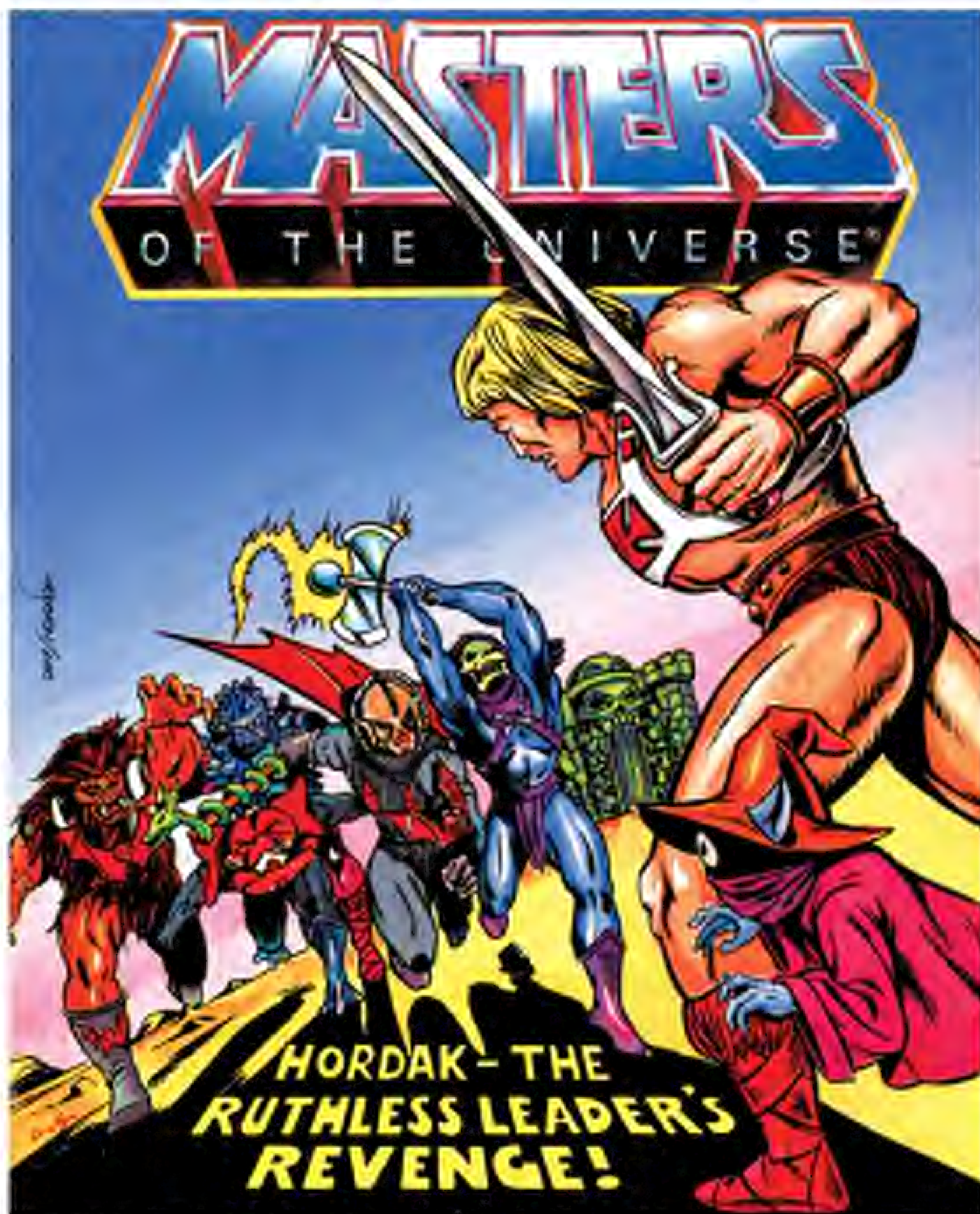
NO, NO, MY
LIEGE! IT IS
THE HEROIC
WARRIORS'
BRAVE
TEAMWORK
THAT WINS THE
DAY...



...AND THE FEARLESS
COURAGE OF THE LIKES
OF LITTLE ORKO THAT
PRESERVES ETERNIA
FROM HARM!







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- As first glance, Hordak's suit appears to be a small, brown suit. But it was originally conceptualized as a concept for the top of the suit in Gary Nardino's 'The Art of He-Man and the Masters of the Universe'.
- Hordak was a character who was very evil and ruthless. He was the one who was the main villain of the 'Masters of the Universe' series.

NO MORE SINISTER A PLACE EXISTS IN SPACE OR TIME THAN HORDAK'S WRETCHED *FRIGHT ZONE*!



IT IS FROM THIS TERROR-FILLED DOMINION THAT THE *EVIL HORDE'S* DIABOLICAL LEADER VENGEFULLY PLOTS THE UNDOING OF HIS FORMER ALLY, *SKELETOR*!

LONG HAVE THE *DOORS* FROM *ETHERIA* TO *ETERNIA* BEEN CLOSED TO ME--



--BY *SKELETOR'S* DARK TREACHERY!

BUT TODAY THE PORTAL *OPENS* AND AT LAST I SHALL TAKE MY SWEET REVENGE!



THE TRAITOR, *SKELETOR*, SHALL BE DESTROYED!

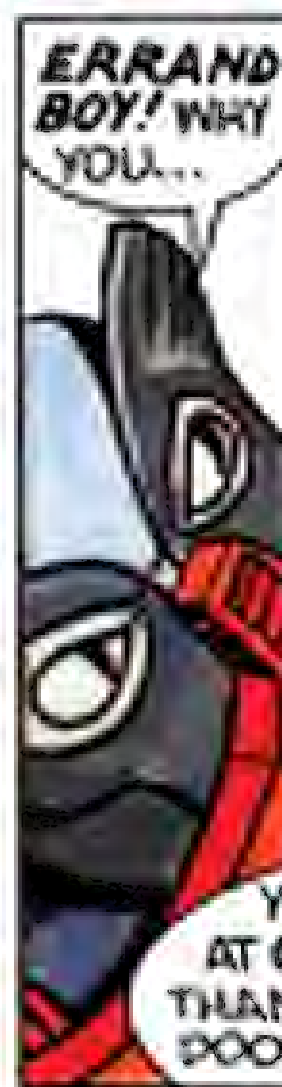
GRIZZLOR, MY HAIRY HENCHMAN-- GO NOW TO *ETERNIA*--

--AND SEIZE FOR ME AN *EVIL WARRIOR* FROM AMONG *SKELETOR'S* RANKS!

IT'S TIME TO PUT MY PLAN TO WORK!



**HORDAK--
THE RUTHLESS LEADER'S REVENGE!**



IF HE WILL COME
TO THE FRIGHT ZONE,
WE CAN BURY THE
HATCHET AND DEFEAT
HE-MAN **ONCE AND
FOR ALL!**

A RENEWED
ALLIANCE BETWEEN
YOU AND SKELETOR?
WHY, NOT EVEN HE-MAN
COULD OUTMATCH THE EVIL
OF YOUR COMBINED FORCES!

FOOL! I DID NOT BRING
YOU HERE TO CHATTER!

TAKE MY MESSAGE
AND... **BE GONE!**

AT SNAKE MOUNTAIN,
SKELETOR GREET'S
HORDAK'S
PROPOSITION WITH
GRIM SUSPICION.

SO... THAT SHIFTY SCOUNDREL
WANTS TO JOIN FORCES,
DOES HE? HUMMM...

SKELETOR,
SURELY YOU'RE
NOT CONSIDERING
RETURNING TO THE
FRIGHT ZONE?

AND WHY NOT,
EVIL-LYN?

WHATEVER
HORDAK'S
MISERABLE
PLANS--

HE IS
**NO MATCH
AGAINST MY
CUNNING!**

BUT, TO
DEFEAT
HE-MAN, I
WILL NEED
HIS HELP!
WE SHALL
GO TO
ETHERIA AT
ONCE AND
SEE JUST
WHAT THE
KNAVE HAS
UP HIS
SLEEVE.

TRU-KLOPS, PREPARE A
BATTLE PARTY AND HAVE
THEM AT THE READY!

WITH HORDAK,
WE WILL TAKE NO
CHANCES. AND
POST A GUARD
HERE AT SNAKE
MOUNTAIN!

STINKOR!

GREETING SKELETOR YOUNGLY, HORDAK CAREFULLY CONCEALS HIS PLOT TO RUIN HIS ARCH-ENEMY AND TURNS THEIR TALK TO HE-MAN AND AN ATTACK ON CASTLE GRAYSKULL...

AHH, SKELETOR, YOU CLEVER TRICKSTER!

SO WISE OF YOU TO HEED MY CALL.

LET US LET BYGONES BE BYGONES, SHALL WE? TOGETHER, WE CAN DEFEAT HE-MAN AND CONQUER CASTLE GRAYSKULL. WHAT SAY YOU?

WHAT IS YOUR PLAN?

YOU AND YOUR HENCHMEN MAKE THE FIRST STRIKE...

AND YOU'LL BRING UP THE REAR? HORDAK-- I DON'T TRUST YOU! WHY SHOULD I RISK MY MEN...?

PERHAPS, IF I SEND GRIZLOR AND LEECH AHEAD TO PICK OFF HE-MAN'S UNSUSPECTING WARRIORS, YOU'D RECONSIDER...

BETTER, BUT...

...ALL RIGHT, SKELETOR, YOU DRAW A HARD BARGAIN.

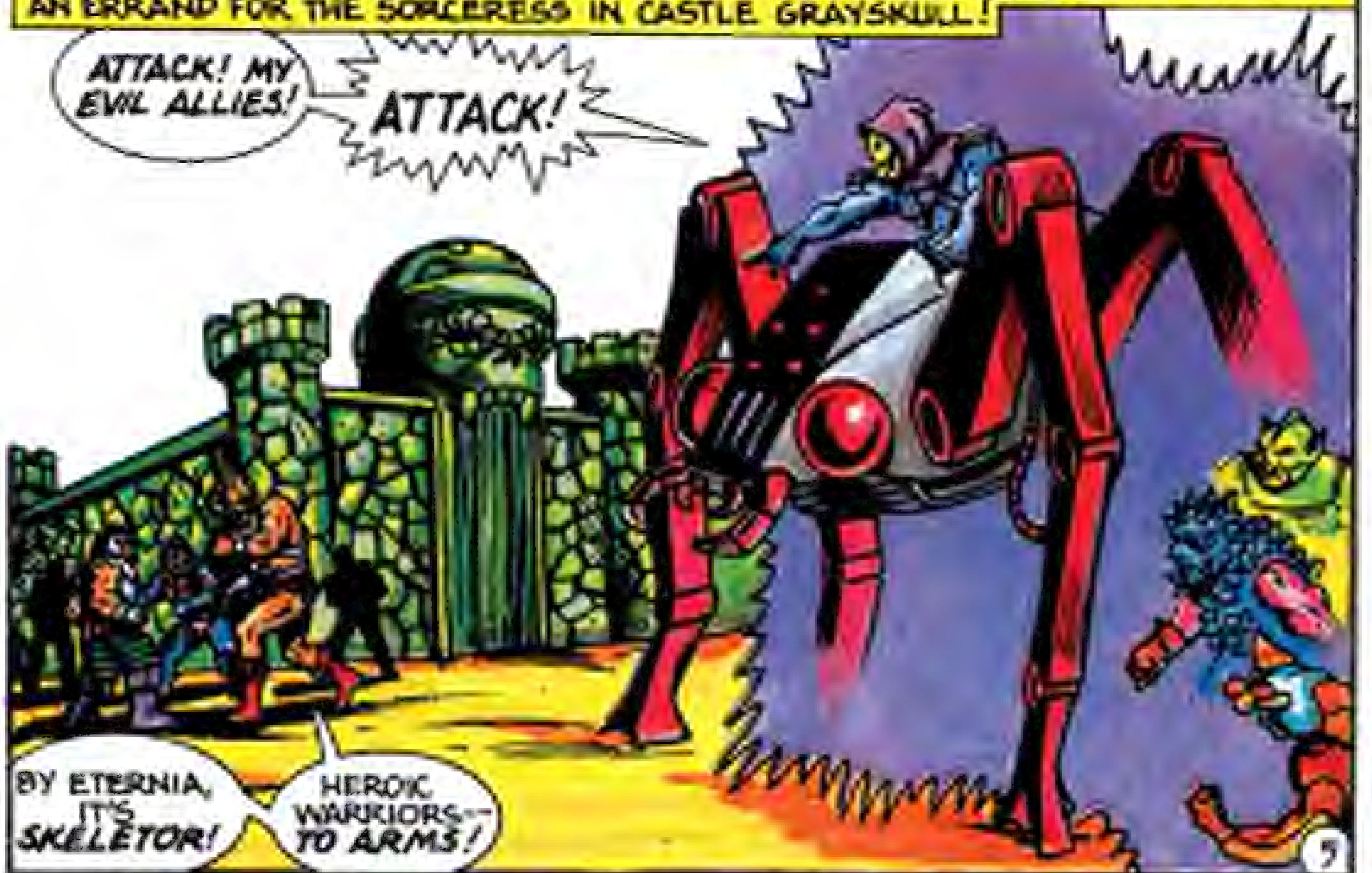
TAKE MANTENNA ALONG AS YOUR SENTRY--HIS ABILITY TO SEE AND HEAR OVER GREAT DISTANCES WILL HELP YOU PREDICT HE-MAN'S EVERY MOVE!

YOUR OFFER IS TEMPTING...

4



THROUGH THE PORTAL FROM ETHERIA, SKELETOR AND HIS HENCHMEN MAKE THEIR WAY TO CASTLE GRAYSKULL! AND THE ASSAULT ON THE STRANGE FORTRESS OF MYSTERY AND POWER BEGINS JUST AS HE-MAN AND THE HEROIC WARRIORS FINISH AN ERRAND FOR THE SORCERESS IN CASTLE GRAYSKULL!







RIDING INTO BATTLE ON HIS MIGHTY BASHOSAURUS--

HE-MAN PURSUES THE EVIL SKELETOR--



BUT FINDS HIS PATH IS BLOCKED BY A SHOCKING PRESENCE.



ONCE AGAIN, THE PORTAL FROM ETHERIA HAS OPENED! AND WITH THE EVIL HORDE AT MY SIDE, CASTLE GRAYSKULL SHALL SOON BE MINE!



AND WHAT MAKES YOU THINK HORDAK WON'T DOUBLE-CROSS YOU?



THAT DODDERING OLD FOOL?

NO LONGER ARE HIS EVIL POWERS EQUAL MATCH TO MINE!

ONCE WE HAVE CAPTURED GRAYSKULL...



I SHALL DESTROY HIM!

DESTROY ME --HA!!!

WRETCHED TRAITOR, YOUR TREACHERY BETRAYS YOU! SNAKE MOUNTAIN IS MINE!

AND NOW, BY A WEAPON OF YOUR OWN MAKING-- YOU SHALL PERISH!



MY LAND-SHARK... SNAKE MOUNTAIN... EGAD! I HAVE BEEN DUPED!



HORDAK, THIS DARK TRICK I SHALL AVENGE! BEFORE THIS DAY IS THROUGH--

I WILL SEE YOU DRAW YOUR FINAL BREATH!



YOU GIVE ME NO CHOICE, SKELETOR!

PREPARE TO MEET YOUR DOOM!

8

AND EVERYWHERE, THE EVIL ENEMIES' GRIM FORCES JOIN IN THE FRAY...



DUMBFOUNDED BY THE STRANGE TURN OF EVENTS, HE-MAN AND THE HEROIC WARRIORS RETURN TO CASTLE GRAYSKULL AND WATCH AS THE CLASH BETWEEN THE FORCES OF EVIL PEAKS TO A FRENZY...



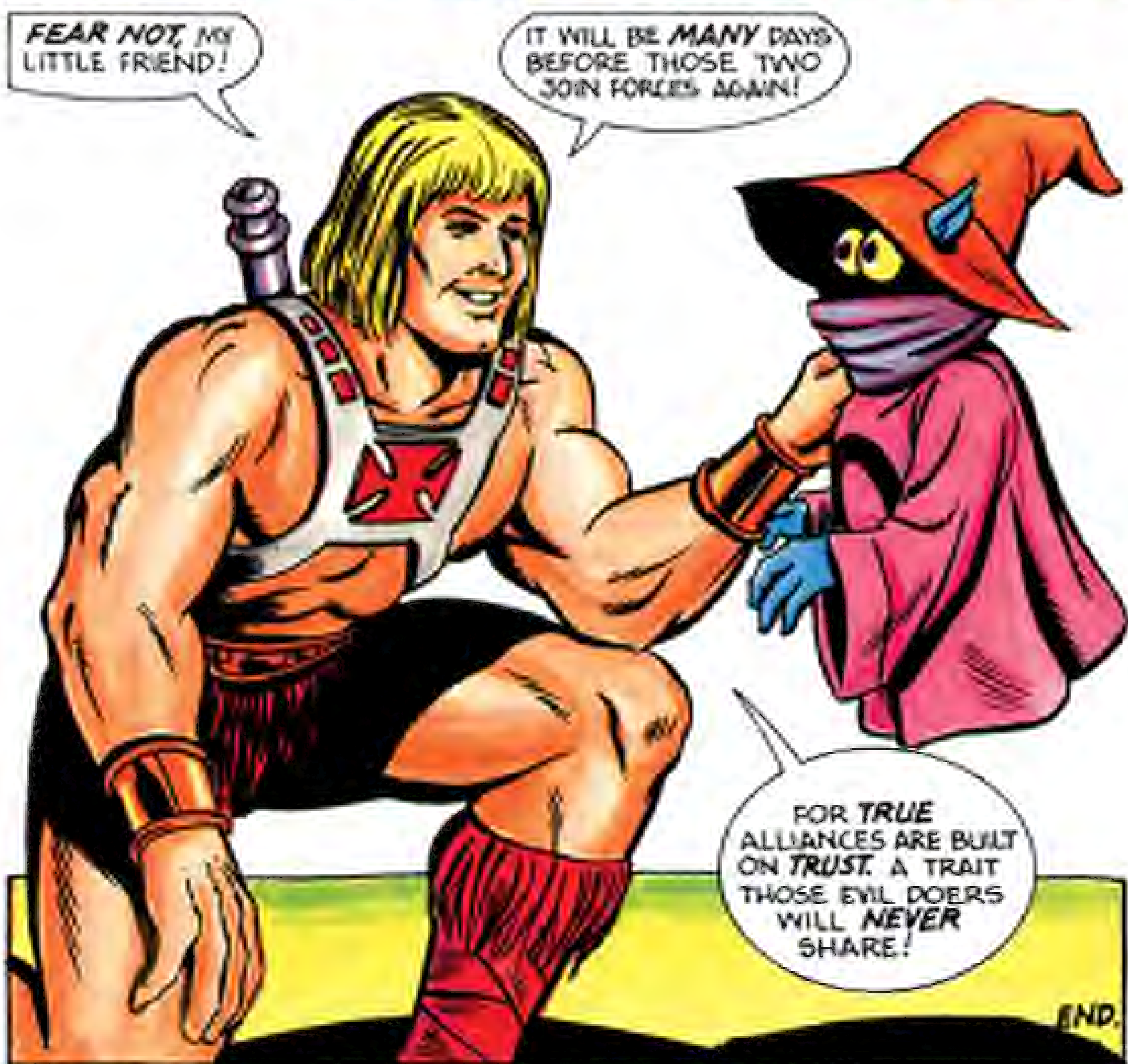






THE POWERS OF EVIL VANQUISHED ONCE MORE, THE HEROIC WARRIORS RAISE A CRY OF CELEBRATION!









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RMST 85410

* In the original version of the story, Hordak and the Evil Horde didn't appear. Ariel Levy (creator) needed to completely replace some of the pages, after it was decided to include the Horde in the miniseries. In the end, Dr. Greedo, Blitzer and Goliath were replaced with Hordak. And Modulok instead of the original threat of Serpenter.

SO EVIL IS HORDAK'S FEARSOME
FRIGHT ZONE THAT NONE HAVE
EVER TRIED TO BREACH ITS WALLS!

BUT NOW A STRANGER
HASTENS TOWARD THE
DARK DOMINION...

—EAGER TO ALLY HIMSELF WITH
HORDAK AND BECOME THE
NEWEST MEMBER OF THE
EVIL HORDE!

MANTENNA!
WHAT IS IT YOU
DETECTED?

SOMETHING MOST
STRANGE, MY EVIL
LIEGE!

MY SENSORS
TELL ME WE
ARE ABOUT
TO HAVE A
VISITOR!

BAH! YA MUST BE GOING BONKERS! WHO
WOULD DARE ENTER THE FRIGHT ZONE?

MO... DU...
LOK!

THE TREACHERY OF **MODULOK!**



SOON THEREAFTER...

I FOUND THESE BOXES ON THE FRONT STEPS OF THE PALACE WITH YOUR NAMES UPON THEM! I BROUGHT THEM STRAIGHT AWAY!

WHO IS IT FROM?



I DON'T KNOW, MY LORD! THERE IS NO CLUE!



WHY WOULD ANYONE SEND ME A LEG?

AND I GOT AN ARM!

WHAT CAN IT MEAN?



LET'S TAKE THEM TO MY FATHER!

ARE WE IN TIME FOR A PARTY?

WHAT'S THIS? MORE PARTS HAVE ARRIVED?

YOU MEAN THERE'S MORE?



PEOPLE ALL OVER THE PALACE HAVE BEEN RECEIVING THEM AND BRINGING THEM TO ME!





I CAN'T MAKE HEADS OR TAILS OF IT! THESE PIECES COULD GO TOGETHER IN A **THOUSAND** DIFFERENT WAYS! I HAVE **NO IDEA** WHAT SORT OF CREATURE IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE!

HELLO, EVERYBODY! LOOK WHAT I JUST GOT!

I WAS EXPECTING A **HEAD** TO ARRIVE--

BUT **TWO** HEADS?

I WILL NOT **DARE** TO ASSEMBLE IT!

AND NOW THAT THEY HAVE, I'M **CONVINCED** THIS IS AN **EVIL THING!**

THERE'S ONLY ONE SAFE PLACE TO TAKE IT...

... **CASTLE GRAYSKULL!**

VERY WELL, I'LL TAKE IT!



ONLY IF I GO WITH YOU!

BUT, TEELA...

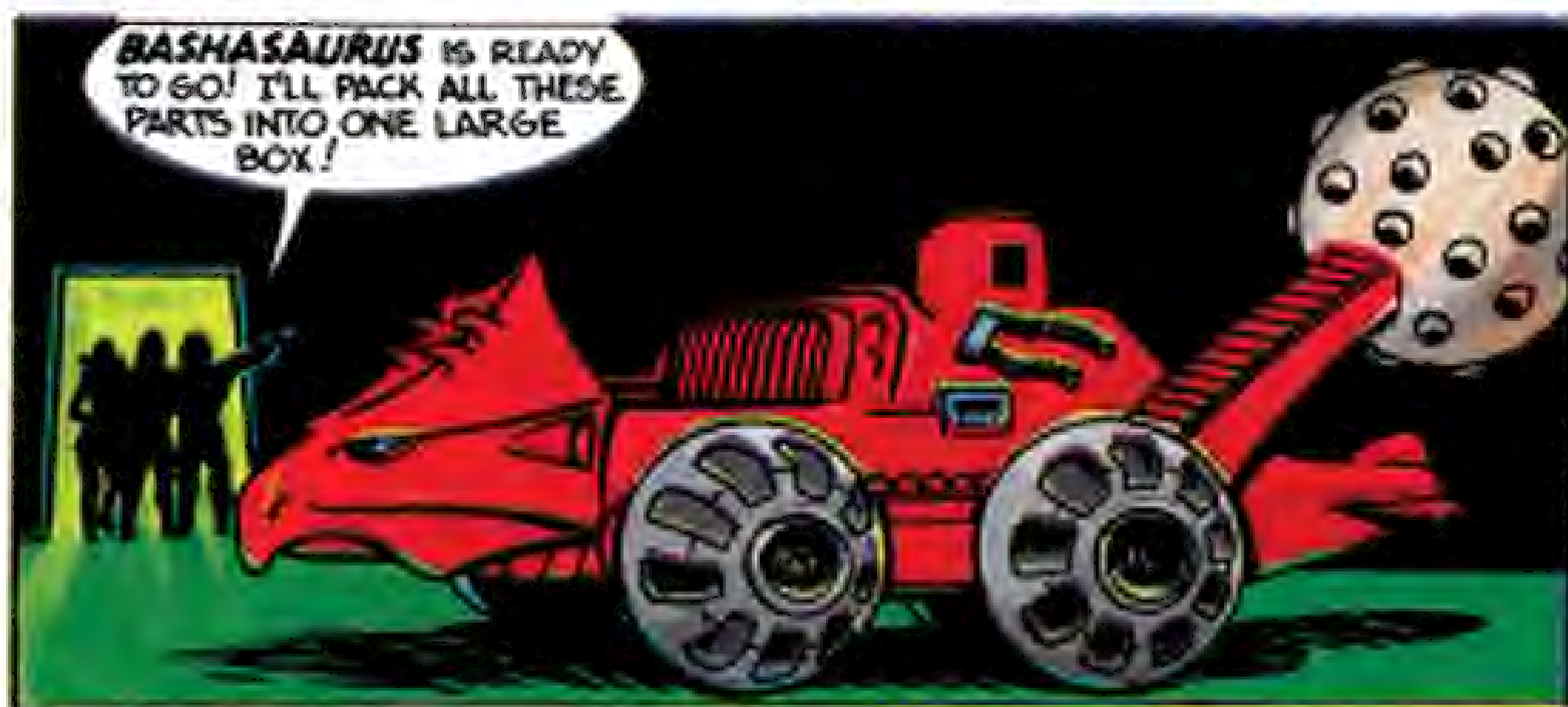
BUT NOTHING!



AS CAPTAIN OF THE ROYAL GUARD, I MUST BE AT YOUR SIDE TO PROTECT YOU!



IF TEELA'S WITH ME, I WON'T BE ABLE TO CHANGE TO HE-MAN!



BASHASAURUS IS READY TO GO! I'LL PACK ALL THESE PARTS INTO ONE LARGE BOX!



MEANWHILE, AT SNAKE MOUNTAIN...



SO... THAT DIRTY TURNCOAT MODULOK SHOWS HIMSELF AT LAST!

...AND WITH A CRAFTY SCHEME TO GET INSIDE CASTLE GRAYSKULL...

...AND SEIZE ITS POWER FOR HIM-SELF!

THIS TREACHERY YOU'LL
PAY FOR, MODULOK! FOR
BY DAY'S END, YOUR PLAN
WILL MAKE ME ONCE
AGAIN **YOUR**
MASTER...



AND
RULER OF
ETERNIA AS
WELL!

HA! HA!
HA! HA!
HA! HA!











LET'S JUST
SEE....



...IF YOU CAN
HANDLE TWO
OF ME!



AARGH! TO DESTROY YOU
NOW WILL GIVE ME TWICE
THE PLEASURE!



I MUST
BREAK THIS
FORCE FIELD!
BUT HOW?



THE TIME HAS COME!
USE THE GIFT I HAVE
GIVEN YOU!

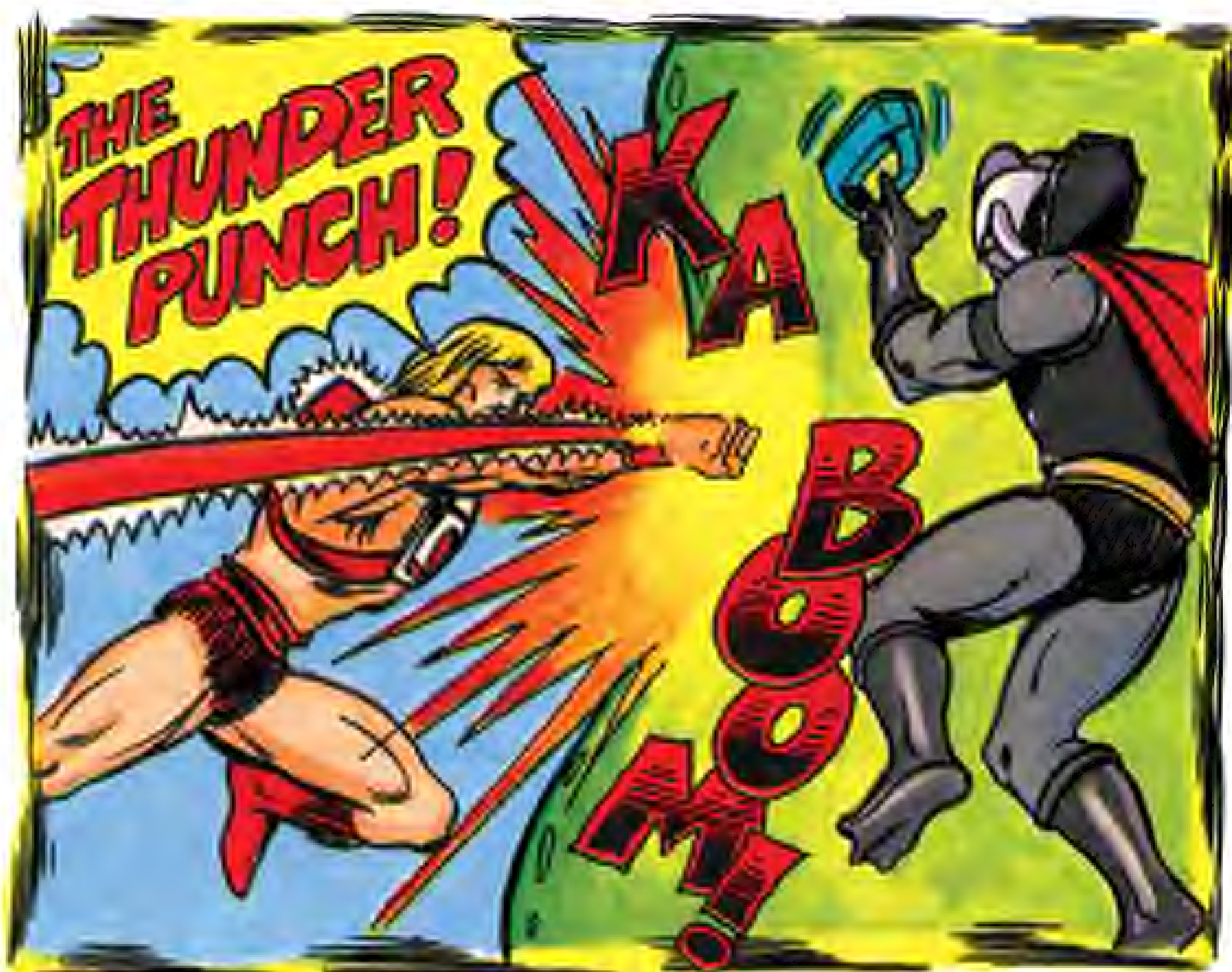


I FEEL IT! THE PACK
THE SORCERESS
GAVE ME IS
GIVING ME
NEW
POWER...



...MORE POWER
THAN I'VE EVER
HAD BEFORE!

THE
POWER
OF...







The POWER of the EVIL HORDE!

Featuring HE-MAN and SKELETOR!



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MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE





This is the story of "The Power of the Evil Horde." You can read along with me in your book. You'll know it's time to turn the page when you hear this sound.....

Dark, menacing clouds whirled across the planet Eternia. As the storm gained speed, it headed straight for Snake Mountain, the evil stronghold of Skeletor.

Webstor climbed down from his lookout to warn Skeletor. "Master! A hurricane is coming!"

Skeletor sensed something strange in the fierce winds. "This is no natural storm. No, it appears to be the work of some evil being!"



Suddenly, a gruesome face took shape in the black clouds. Skeletor knew right away who was behind the storm! "Hordak! The ruthless leader of the Evil Horde!"

Webstor cowered behind his master. "But why has he come here? What could he want with us?"

"It is me he wants! Did I never tell you? Hordak was once my teacher here on Eternia, but I grew too powerful for him. I taught HIM a lesson or two!"



Long fingers of lightning split the sky as the scowling face of Hordak drew nearer. "Greetings, Skeletor! You are finally going to pay for your betrayal!"

Skeletor shook his fist at Hordak. "You weak old fool! You will never rule me again!"

"We shall see—AFTER I gain the power of Castle Grayskull!"

Meanwhile, at Castle Grayskull, Orko kept his eye on the clouds. "Hmmm. Something just doesn't feel right about this storm, Adam."

"Yeah, I know what you mean. It seemed to come up so quickly." Suddenly, Hordak's face appeared in the clouds over Grayskull. "Man-at-Arms, look! Who is that?"

"Ah, so it's HORDAK who's behind this weather!"



Adam whirled around. "Hordak? From the Evil Horde? Excuse me, Man-at-Arms, I just remembered something I had to do!"

Prince Adam rushed from the room and pulled his sword from its scabbard. "By the power of Grayskull... I HAVE THE POWER!" Energy coursed through Adam's body. Huge muscles bulged out as his chest expanded.



Adam was going through the most amazing transformation of all! "I am HE-MAN, Master of the Universe! Now to welcome Hordak to Eternia!"

The Heroic Warriors raced out of the castle. Suddenly, a thick bolt of lightning streaked down from above! When the smoke cleared, there stood the Evil Hordak! Hordak stepped to the front. "So this is Castle Grayskull—seat of all power in Eternia? I must get inside! Leech—suck the energy from the warriors!" Leech leaped at Man-at-Arms, his suction cup hands sticking to the warrior's skin.



He-Man tried to rescue his friend. "Let him go!" Suddenly, Manticora's eyes popped up and sent stun-rays streaming at He-Man, who was thrown backward from their force.

But He-Man wasn't down for long. As Grizzlor tried to grab Orko from the air, He-Man leaped at the hairy henchman and knocked him right into Mantenna.



Both Evil Horde members went sprawling! Then He-Man spun around and swung his sword mightily at Leech. The master of power suction lost his grip on Man-at-Arms.

Man-at-Arms could hardly stand. "He's weakened me, He-Man!"

"Then do not fight! Go for help! I'll hold them off!"

Hordak smiled and advanced slowly on He-Man. "Now that we know your strengths and weaknesses, He-Man, let's finish this little battle, eh?"

A blinding ball of energy suddenly burst over the warriors' heads. Orko gasped when he saw what caused the explosion. "Skeletor!"

"That's right! I've come to stop Hordak from entering Castle Grayskull! Eternia is MY territory, Hordak! Go back to Etheria!"

Hordak clenched his fists. "You thought I would never escape your trap, but you were wrong! I am more powerful — and more evil — than ever! Neither you nor He-Man can stop me now!"





Hordak pointed at Skeletor, surrounding the evil warrior with an eerie glow. "You are now locked in my magical prison! Let's see you figure THAT out, pupil! And as for you, He-Man..." Hordak reached up and suddenly grabbed Orko out of the air. "Skeletor's words about territory are well-taken. I am returning to Etheria! If you want to save your little wizard, you'll have to fight me at the Fright Zone!"

He-Man swung mightily at Hordak, but it was too late! The Evil Horde leader threw up his hands in a flourish. All of the Evil Horde disappeared in a cloud of smoke, along with Orko and Skeletor!



For a moment, He-Man didn't know which way to turn. "Etheria? The Fright Zone? I know nothing of these places! How can I save my friend Orko?"

But there was one who had the answer. The voice of the Sorceress echoed through He-Man's mind. "Go to the center of the vine jungle. There you will find an enchanted tree with silver leaves. Pick a leaf and carry it with you. Each time you stroke it, you will be transported through the gate between Eternia and Etheria."

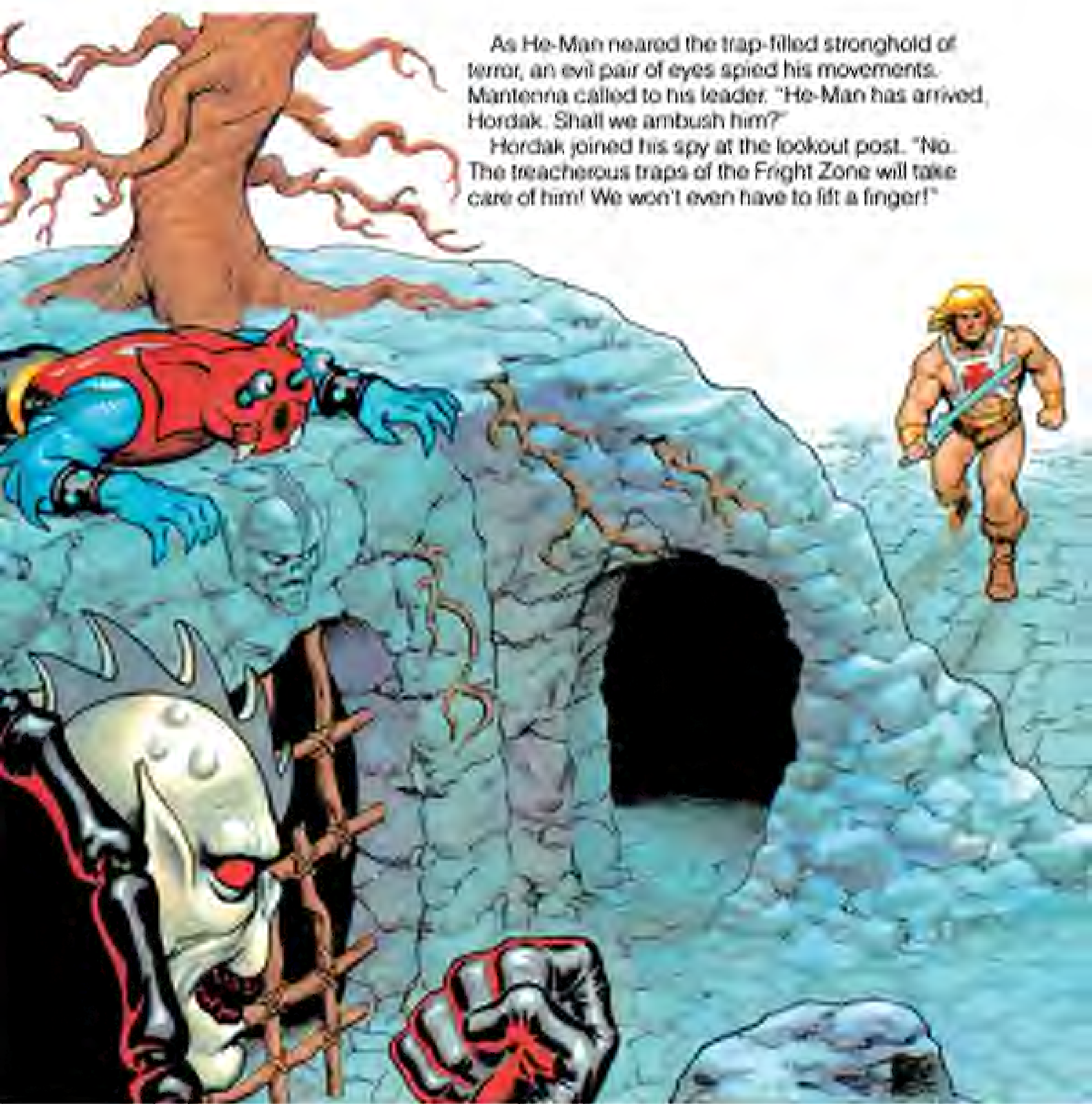


A heavy mist shrouded the vine jungle in darkness. He-Man slashed his way through the tangled growth as quickly as he could. Finally he came to a clearing. There, shimmering in a strange silver light, stood the enchanted tree. He-Man picked a leaf and stroked it. Suddenly a warm wind rushed through the jungle, and a



great, dark hole began to take shape near He-Man. "The passage to Etheria! Here I come, Orko!"

The opening swallowed He-Man right up! In an instant, he was standing on the bleak terrain of Etheria, and not far away stood his destination — the Fright Zone!



As He-Man neared the trap-filled stronghold of terror, an evil pair of eyes spied his movements. Mantenna called to his leader. "He-Man has arrived, Hordak. Shall we ambush him?"

Hordak joined his spy at the lookout post. "No. The treacherous traps of the Fright Zone will take care of him! We won't even have to lift a finger!"

With a mighty leap, He-Man scaled the walls of the Fright Zone. "Maybe I'll be able to take Hordak by surprise." When He-Man reached the top of the hill, he was the one who was surprised! An old, dead tree suddenly reached out with its shriveled branches and held He-Man tight! "Trapped by a tree! Well, I'm just going to have to chop it down!"

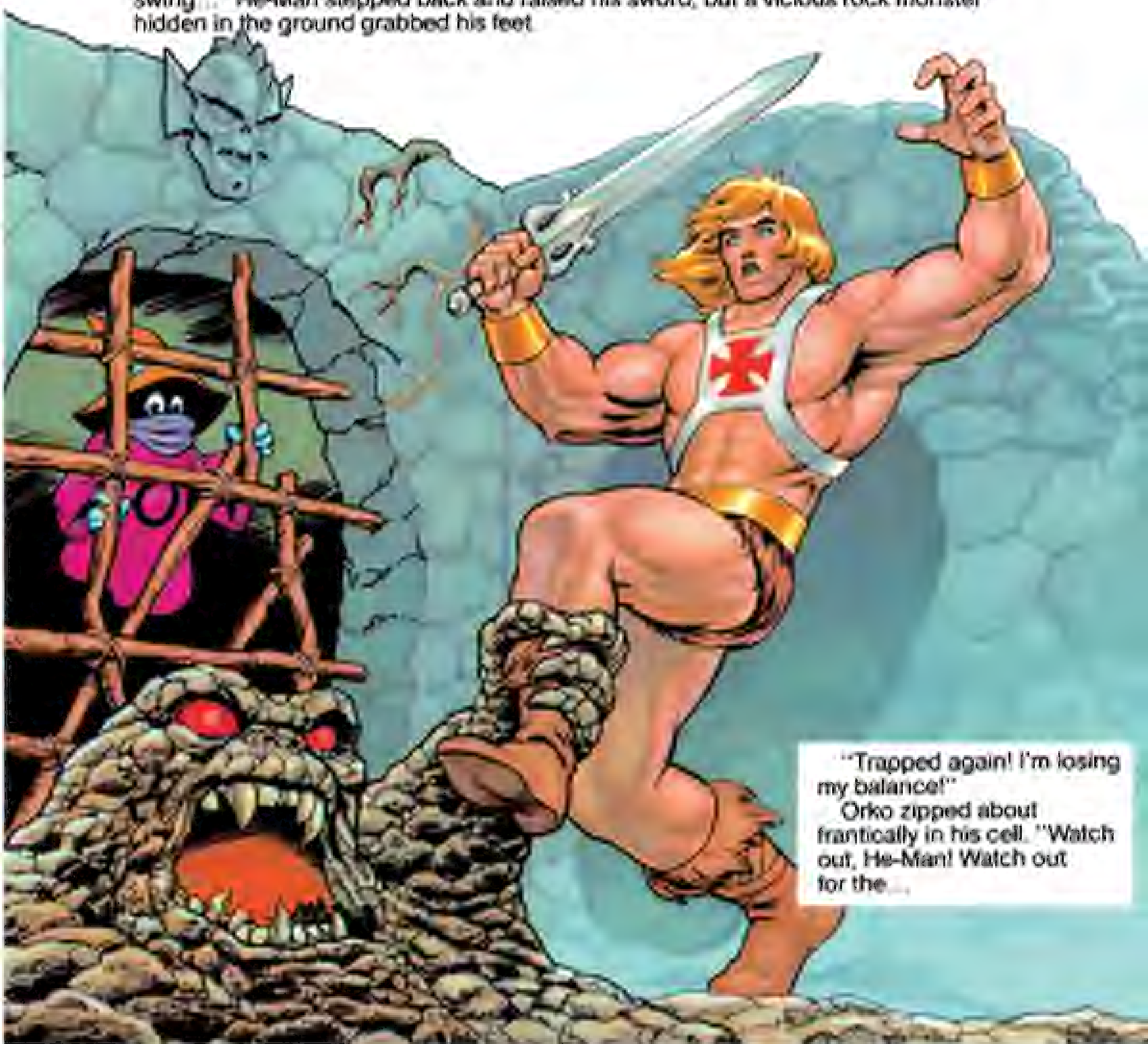
He-Man struggled to reach his sword, but the beastly branches just gripped the heroic warrior even tighter.



"By Etemia, enough of this! You're going to be firewood, tree!" He-Man flexed his giant muscles, and the branches splintered into thousands of pieces!

As he broke free of the tree, He-Man heard a familiar voice. "He-Man! It's Orko! Be careful! This place is full of traps!"

He-Man raced to the prison. "Hang on, little friend, you'll be free with just one swing..." He-Man stepped back and raised his sword, but a vicious rock monster hidden in the ground grabbed his feet.



"Trapped again! I'm losing my balance!"

Orko zipped about frantically in his cell. "Watch out, He-Man! Watch out for the..."

"... DRAGON!"

His feet trapped, He-Man fell backward, almost into the jaws of the roaring dragon! "Got to get free of this rock first!" With one swift kick, He-Man loosened the rock monster's grip. "Now for this fire-breathing beast!"

The dragon squirmed farther out of its dark cave. He-Man easily dodged the flames that shot from its horrible mouth. "I can't get a clean shot at this foul creature! Guess I'll have to try a new strategy!" He-Man jumped up to the top of the dragon's lair and took aim at his prey from above. "While the creature tries to turn itself around, I'll knock—it—out!" The dragon was out cold.



Orko cheered for He-Man. "You defeated all of Hordak's traps!"
He-Man raced to free his friend. "All but this prison, Orko, but it won't slow me down!"



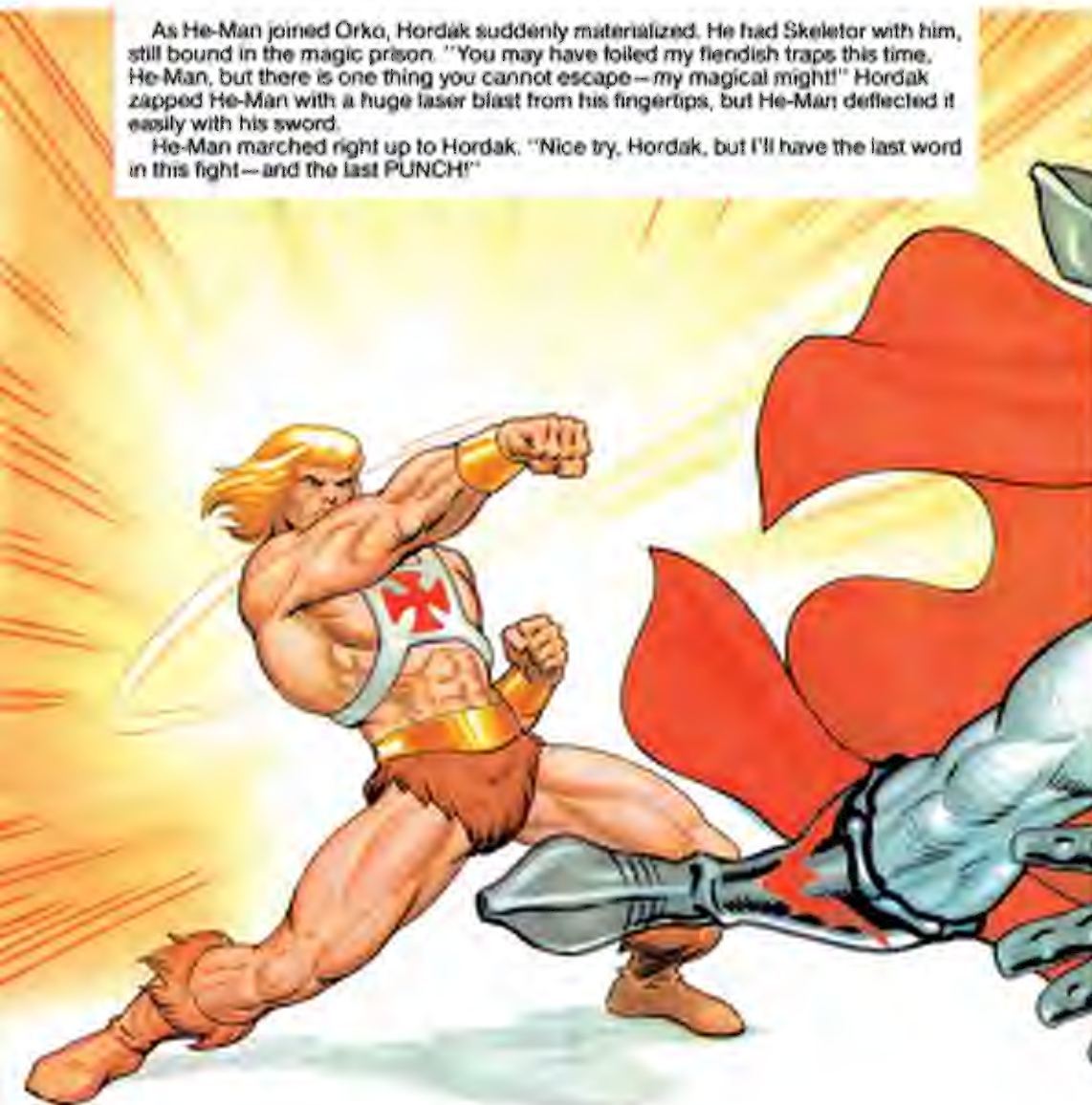
Just then, Grizzlor sneaked up on He-Man. "Grrr! I'll stop you cold!" Raising his mighty claws, the hairy beast took a swipe at He-Man, but He-Man ducked out of the way just in time!

He-Man swung his sword again and again at Grizzlor as he raced up the stone stairway next to the prison. He kicked open the release lever, and the prison door flew open! "Hurry, Orko! Get out!" The wizard zoomed to freedom. "Now to give Grizzlor a taste of his own hospitality!" In one swift move, He-Man reached down and shoved Grizzlor into the prison. "There! All locked up!"



As He-Man joined Orko, Hordak suddenly materialized. He had Skeletor with him, still bound in the magic prison. "You may have foiled my fiendish traps this time, He-Man, but there is one thing you cannot escape—my magical might!" Hordak zapped He-Man with a huge laser blast from his fingertips, but He-Man deflected it easily with his sword.

He-Man marched right up to Hordak. "Nice try, Hordak, but I'll have the last word in this fight—and the last PUNCH!"



He-Man delivered a super smack that sent Hordak right up into the branches of the tree trap! "Your traps seem to be working fine now, Hordak! Your evil ways have worked against you, not FOR you!"

As He-Man and Orko turned to leave, Skeletor stopped them. "Please, He-Man. You can't leave me here trapped in this horrible spell! Take me back to Eternia with you!"

He-Man looked into Skeletor's eyes. "How can I trust you? You have tried to harm me many times before."

"You have my word as a warrior! Please! I'll never survive if I'm left at Hordak's mercy!"





He-Man turned to Orko. "Can you break the spell that holds Skeletor?"

"Why, I think so. But He-Man..."

"Then free him. Let us all return to our home world," Orko cast a magic spell, and Skeletor was freed.

He-Man pulled out the silver leaf. "Back to Eternia!"

As soon as the trio stepped on Eternian soil, Skeletor disappeared in a puff of black smoke. "Thanks for the ride, fools! See you in battle, He-Man!"

Orko couldn't believe his ears. "How could you let Skeletor trick you like that, He-Man?"



"I knew Skeletor would turn on us, but if he had stayed in Etheria, he would have been doomed. I could not ignore his pleas. We must always value life, even the life of one who opposes us."

Orko shook He-Man's hand. "You are truly a brave and generous hero, He-Man. Now if only some of that would rub off on Skeletor and Hordak!"

Many know you as the famed creator of Usagi Yojimbo and as a longtime comic book creator, cartoonist, and illustrator. However, you were also the letterer on a number of the Masters of the Universe minicomics for Mattel. Could you talk a bit about your background as a comics creator? How did you get involved with the MOTU minicomics?

I grew up reading comics and am so grateful that I am now a member of the industry. My involvement with MOTU came very early in my professional career. Besides writing and drawing Usagi Yojimbo, I was also lettering Sergio Aragones's Groo the Mender comic book and the Spider-Man Sunday newspaper strip. Working under Stan Lee, Lee Licensing acquired an agreement with Mattel to package the MOTU minicomics, or "in-pack books," as we called them. Lee had assembled quite a lineup of talent, many of whom were just breaking into the comics industry, along with established pros—Bruce Timm, Larry Houston, Mike Sekowsky, Dave Stevens, Alfredo Alcala, and so many others. Lee acted as our editor and liaison with Mattel, handing out assignments, establishing deadlines, and paying the talent.

Had you ever heard of Masters of the Universe prior to your involvement? If so, what were your thoughts on it?

Yes, I had heard of Masters of the Universe even prior to my involvement. I loved the series and the concept of an entire world of superheroes and the battle of the good guys vs. the bad guys. They were very clearly defined. You were either on He-Man's side or Skeator's.

Do you have any funny or interesting stories and memories to share about your time on the Masters of the Universe minicomics?

I don't remember any particular memories. We had very tight deadlines, but still handed in quality work on time. There was one character that Mattel had named "Ball Buster" that we thought was really funny. I think Lee talked to them and persuaded them to change it.

Did you have the opportunity to work on She-Ra at all? How about the relaunch of He-Man as New Adventures?



I worked on She-Ra as well, and my involvement with Mattel led to a few other projects, such as Captain Power. I was not involved with the He-Man relaunch, though.

In what capacity did you work on She-Ra?

We also produced a few She-Ra minis. I was the letterer for those as well.

If you were going to make up your own Masters of the Universe character, what would it be?

Since I am so noted for my creation of a garrulous rabbit, my character would be Master Bunny, with super burrowing powers.

Do you have any parting words of wisdom?

Keep drawing. Keep creating. ✱




MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE®




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A CRACKLING FIRE WARMS A CHAMBER IN THE ROYAL PALACE OF ETERNIA AS HE-MAN AND THE SORCERESS SIT QUIETLY DISCUSSING THE ONGOING STRUGGLE AGAINST SKELETOR.



I HAVE A SPECIAL WEAPON FOR YOU, HE-MAN! YOU MUST STAND BEFORE ME TO RECEIVE IT!




YOU DON'T HAVE TO REWARD ME WITH WEAPONS, SORCERESS! YOUR PRESENCE IS HONOR ENOUGH!



IT IS NOT SO MUCH A WEAPON. RATHER IT IS A GIFT OF ENERGY AND SPIRIT!

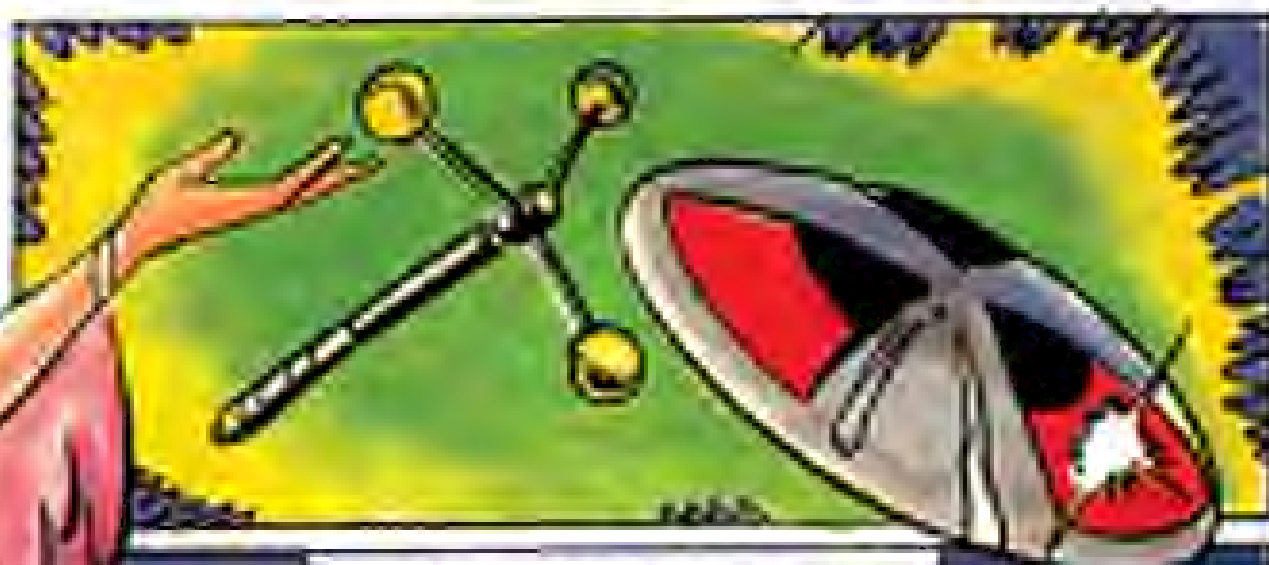
BY THE POWER OF THE ETERNIAN ELDERS, I BESTOW UPON YOU THE...

**FLYING
FISTS OF
POWER!**



PRODUCED EXCLUSIVELY FOR MATTEL BY:
WRITER-TIM KILPIN
PENCILER-JIM MITCHELL
INKER-STEVE MITCHELL
LETTERER-STAN SAKAI
COLORIST-CHARLES SIMPSON
EDITOR-LEE NORDLING

CALL UPON THIS NEWFOUND
STRENGTH WHEN YOU AND
YOUR WARRIORS FACE YOUR
DARKEST
HOUR!



THESE WEAPONS WILL
ALWAYS BE AT YOUR SIDE
WHEN YOU SUMMON
THIS POWER!



THANK
YOU,
SORCERESS!

MEANWHILE, UP AMONG
THE CRAGGY PEAKS OF
THE MYSTIC MOUNTAINS...



I CAN
FEEL THE
POWER OF
CASTLE
GRAYSKULL
BECKONING
ME!

MY
BONES ACHES
WITH THE
ENERGY!

SKELETOR STALKS RESTLESSLY
ACROSS THE BARREN
FLOORS OF SNAKE MOUNTAIN!





OH BUT ONE DOES... A **HUMAN** KEY!

I'LL KIDNAP **PRINCE ADAM**, SON OF KING RANDOR AND HEIR TO THE THRONE OF ETERNIA!

HE-MAN, SPINELESS CREATURE THAT HE IS, WILL SURELY LET ME PASS THROUGH THE CASTLE DOORS...

ONCE I THREATEN TO DO AWAY WITH ADAM!

SEVERAL DAYS LATER, PRINCE ADAM TAKES A FEW MOMENTS TO ENJOY THE PEACEFUL SOLITUDE OF A SUNNY ETERNIAN VALE.



THE YOUNG PRINCE DOES NOT NOTICE THE OMINOUS CLOUDS GATHERING ON THE HORIZON.

WHY DO YOU STRAY SO FAR FROM YOUR PALACE, PRINCE?



THE ROYAL PALACE WAS TOO HECTIC FOR ME TODAY... AND THIS IS THE MOST PEACEFUL SPOT IN ALL ETERNIA.

SUDDENLY, THE BIRD BEGINS TO TRANSFORM INTO A HORRIBLE, HUGE VULTURE!





AH, MY FRIEND, IT IS **YOU** WHO WILL NEVER GET AWAY!

WITH A BLINDING FLOURISH OF LIGHT, SKELETOR CASTS HIS FOUL SPELL.

BINDING ADAM IN A SET OF MYSTIC MANACLES!



THESE CHAINS ARE UNBREAKABLE! THE MORE YOU STRUGGLE, THE TIGHTER THEY WILL BECOME!

ONLY I CAN REVERSE THE SPELL AND SET YOU FREE!

AND I HAVE NO INTENTION OF EVER SETTING YOU FREE!
HA! HA! HA!



FAR FROM ETERNIA'S ROLLING FIELDS,
THE HEROIC WARRIORS STAND GUARD
AT CASTLE GRAYSKULL.



SUDDENLY, THE MISTY SILENCE SURROUNDING
THE FORTRESS IS SHATTERED BY THE ARRIVAL OF...



AND HE'S
TAKEN ADAM
PRISONER!



KEEN OBSERVATION,
SY-KLONE, BUT IF
YOU DON'T MIND, I'D
RATHER NOT WASTE
MY TIME TALKING TO
YOU... PEASANTS!

CALL YOUR
FRIEND HE-MAN!
WE HAVE BUSINESS
TO DISCUSS!





HE-MAN LEFT US TO GUARD THE CASTLE, AND WE SHALL **NEVER** ALLOW YOU TO PASS!

VERY WELL, THEN.

I SHALL SIMPLY DO AWAY WITH YOUR PRECIOUS PRINCE HERE!



I'LL FIND HE-MAN, SKELETOR!



AND IF YOU HARM OUR PRINCE...

...YOU'LL BE FORCED TO FEEL MY STING!



WE WILL NOT FIGHT YOU, SKELETOR!

ALL WE ASK IS THAT YOU SPARE ADAM.

BUT WE WILL **NOT** ALLOW YOU TO ENTER GRAYSKULL!



WHO ARE YOU TO TELL ME WHAT I CAN AND CANNOT DO?

SO YOU WON'T FIGHT ME, EH? WE'LL JUST SEE HOW FAR I CAN **PUSH** YOU BEFORE YOU STRIKE BACK!



SKELETOR'S EVIL ENERGY BEAM BATTERS THE DOORS OF CASTLE GRAYSKULL, BUT THE MIGHTY FORTRESS IS STRONGER THAN ANYTHING THE EVIL MASTER HAS EVER ENCOUNTERED!

UNDAUNTED, SKELETOR CONTINUES TO BLAST AWAY AT THE DOORS.



NOW'S MY CHANCE!

BY THE POWER OF GRAYSKULL...

I AM HE-MAN!

NOW TO PUT THE SORCERESS' GIFT TO USE!

I CALL UPON THE FLYING FISTS OF POWER!



LIGHTNING RIPPLES THROUGH HE-MAN'S BODY AS THE MYSTICAL GIFT OF MIGHT ENERGIZES HIS EVERY MUSCLE!

HIS FISTS FLAILING MIGHTILY, HE-MAN DISINTEGRATES THE CHAINS OF DOOM, TURNING THEM TO MERE DUST!



AAARGGGH!





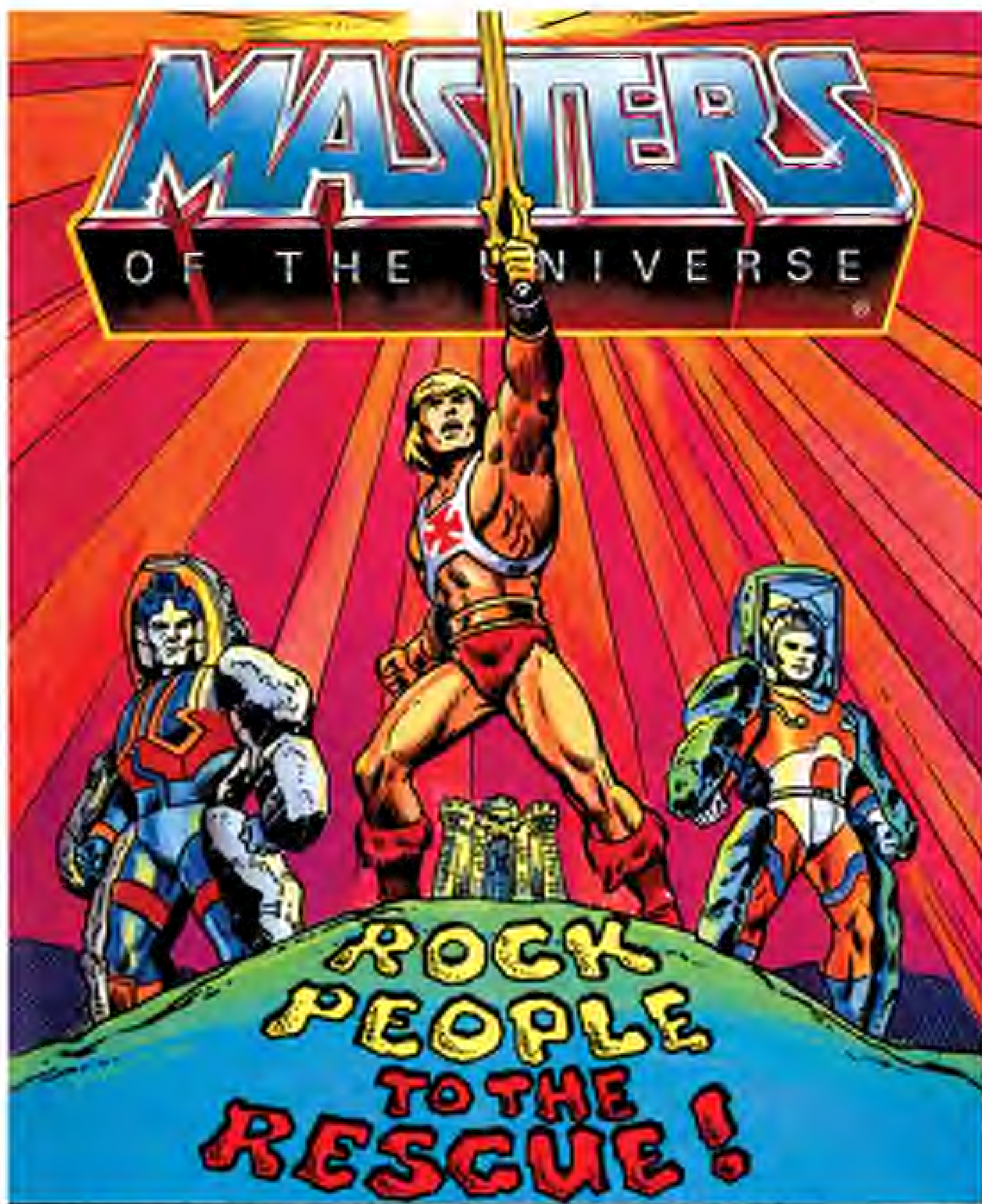


HE-MAN'S SPINNING SHIELD GATHERS SKELETOR'S POWER BLAST AND THRUSTS IT BACK AT THE VILLAINOUS TRIO!









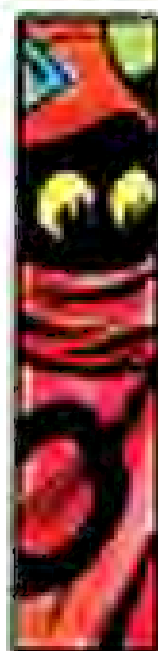
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IN THE EARLY HOURS OF DAWN, HE-MAN AND ORKO ARE TAKING A TEST RIDE IN THE NEW JET SLED THAT MAN-AT-ARMS HAS JUST INVENTED WHEN...



LOOK AT THE INCREDIBLE SPEED OF THOSE METEORS, ORKO!

LET'S FOLLOW THEM AND SEE IF THE JET SLED CAN CATCH UP WITH THEM. IT WILL BE A TRUE TEST!



HE-MAN - LOOK! THOSE METEORS...



THEY'RE CHANGING SHAPE!



ROCK PEOPLE TO THE RESCUE!

IT'S AMAZING, ORKO! THEY'RE HUMANS!



PRODUCED EXCLUSIVELY FOR MATTEL BY:
WRITERS- GAYLE GILBARD, LARRY HOUSTON
PENCILER- LARRY HOUSTON; INKER- BRUCE TMM
LETTERER- STAN SAKAI; COLORIST- CHARLES SIMPSON
EDITOR- LEE NORDLING; ART DIRECTOR- RON COOK

GREETINGS, HE-MAN! WE WERE HOPING TO FIND YOU! I AM STONEDAR, LEADER OF THE PEACEFUL ROCK PEOPLE!

AND I AM ROKKON, HIS BRAVEST WARRIOR! WE'VE COME TO HELP FIGHT THE FORCES OF EVIL!

SPEAKING OF EVIL, WHAT'S SKELETOR UP TO THESE DAYS? I CAN'T WAIT TO GET AT HIM!

YOU MUST EXCUSE ROKKON, HE-MAN. SOMETIMES HIS YOUTHFUL EXUBERANCE GETS THE BEST OF HIM!

HE FORGETS THAT WE TRY TO USE PEACEFUL METHODS WHENEVER POSSIBLE!

I'M HONORED TO MEET YOU! WELCOME TO ETERNIA!

BUT WHILE HE-MAN AND ORKO GREET THEIR NEW ALLIES, SINISTER EYES ARE WATCHING!

WE MUST TELL SKELETOR ABOUT THESE ASTOUNDING ROCK CREATURES!

SIT DOWN, FOOL. SKELETOR SENT US TO USE MY **NEW** MIST AND BRING HE-MAN UNDER HIS POWER. LET US CAPTURE **ALL** OF THEM AND SURPRISE SKELETOR WITH A PRESENT!

I, THE MASTER OF SSSNAKES CAN HANDLE THISSS... WITH YOUR ASSISSSTANCE, OF COURSSSE, DEAR WEBSTOR!



BUT IT IS TOO LATE!









HOW CAN I
KNOW WHO TO
BELIEVE?

MEANWHILE, ROKKON SPOTS THE
TROUBLE BELOW HIM... BUT
HE *DOESN'T* SEE THAT
WEBSTOR HOLDS ORKO
PRISONER.



I'LL
KNOCK...



...THAT EVIL
CREATURE...



...RIGHT
OUT OF THIS
DESERT!



THAT
ROCK-MAN
IS ATTACKING--
HE IS AIMING HIM-
SELF AT THE WEBBED
MAN!



SHOULD
I SAVE THE
WEBBED MAN
OR THE
WIZARD?

WHO IS
GOOD AND
WHO IS
EVIL?

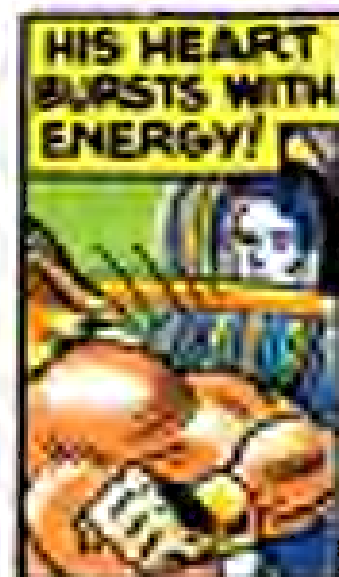


BELIEVE
IN YOURSELF!
TRUST YOUR
INSTINCTS TO
TELL YOU
WHO THE EVIL
POWER IS
HERE!



IN
YOUR HEART,
YOU'LL KNOW
WHAT'S RIGHT
AND TRUE!

WHAT
DO I
DO?





...IF THEY HAVEN'T ALREADY!

THE EVIL MASTER WAVES HIS WAND STAFF — AND VANISHES!



FROM THE COLD, MYSTERIOUS SNAKE MOUNTAIN TO THE WARM AND WINDY HIGH DESERT, SKELETOR TRAVELS THE DISTANCE IN AN INSTANT!



INCOMPETENT FOOLS!

WATCH ME AND I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO CAPTURE HE-MAN!



WATCH HOW I DEFEAT HE-MAN—



WITH HIS OWN WEAPONRY!



NICE LITTLE VEHICLE, HE-MAN...



ALL THE EXTRAS, I SEE!



WELL, SKELETOR!
I WAS HOPING WE'D
RUN INTO YOU!

AS YOU CAN SEE,
LASERS ARE NO
MATCH FOR ROCK
PEOPLE!



BAH!
THIS
MACHINE
IS
USELESS!

I'LL
USE
MY OWN
ENERGY
BEAM!



STAND
RIGHT THERE,
STONE-
HEADS--



WHILE I BLAST
YOU INTO LITTLE
PEBBLES!



HIT BY HIS OWN MAGIC,
SKELETOR IS FLUNG INTO
A SAND DUNE.

WHUMP!

UH-OH! SKELETOR
LOOKS REALLY
UPSET NOW!

HE-MAN!

YOU'LL PAY
FOR THIS
INDIGNITY!

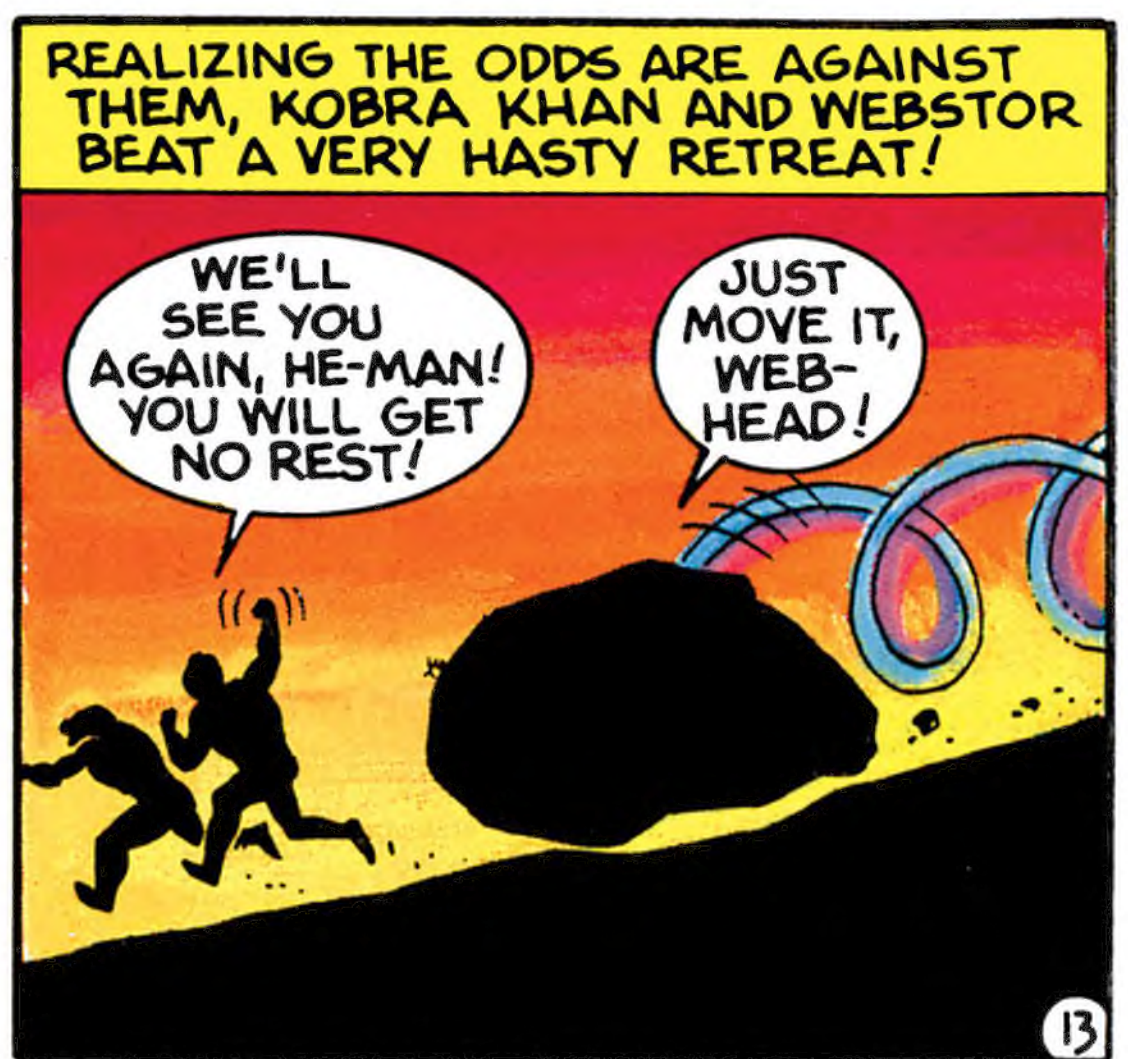
THIS TIME WE SHALL
SEE WHO IS THE
MIGHTIEST!

THIS TIME I
WILL HUMBLE
YOU-- DESTROY
YOU-- WITH MY
BARE HANDS!

SKELETOR...

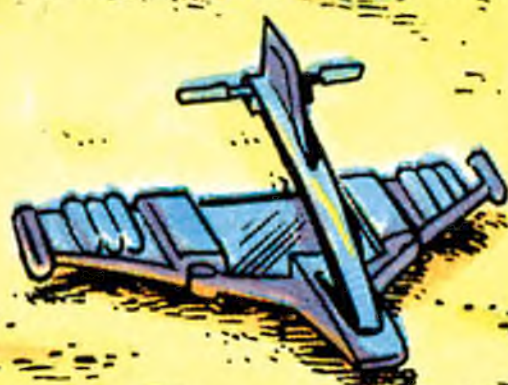
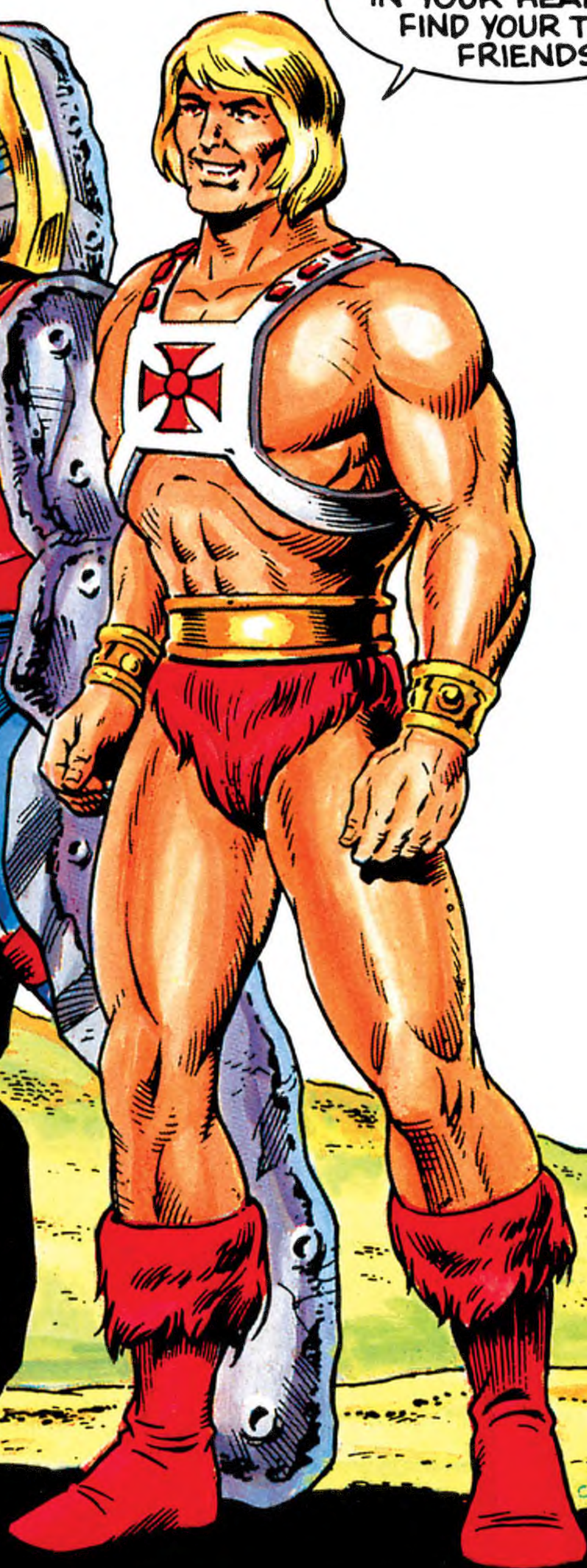
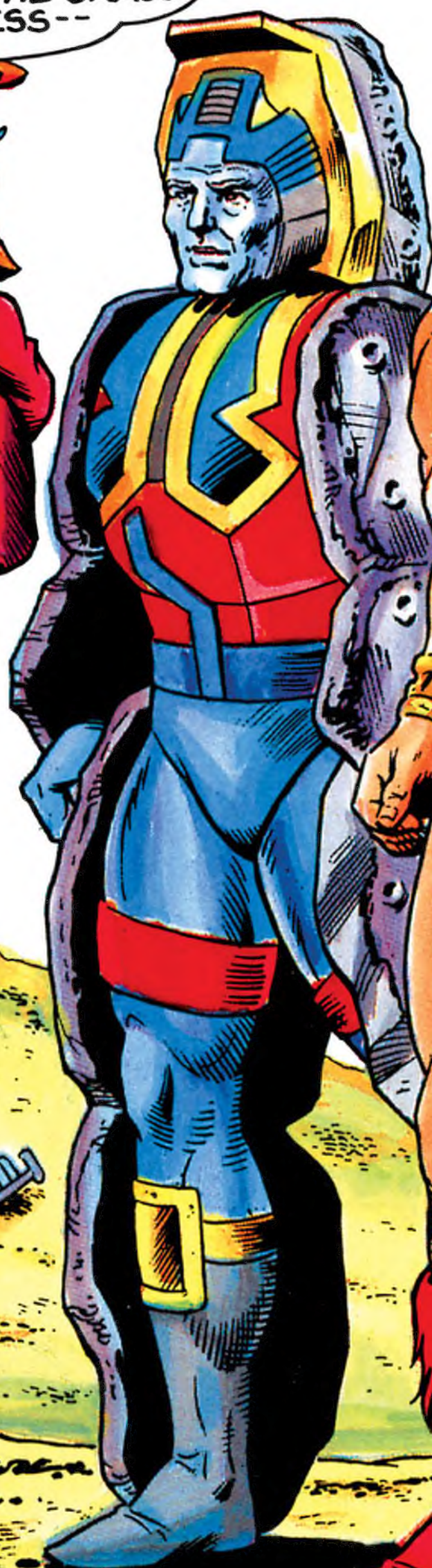


HE-MAN WAS TOO FAST AND TOO STRONG FOR THE EVIL WARRIOR!



I'M NOT WORRIED,
EVEN *SNAKES IN THE GRASS*
ARE POWERLESS--

--WHEN YOU TRUST
IN YOUR HEART TO
FIND YOUR TRUE
FRIENDS!



END.





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